















**Notes**  
**CSB**



NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF THE  
CONGREGATION OF PRIESTS OF  
SAINT BASIL — COLLECTED BY  
ROBERT JOSEPH SCOLLARD, CSB



5 2



1957 - 1969



L E T T E R S

w r i t t e n

to his family

b y

Kevin John Kirley

CSB

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2

1957 - 1967









# C O N T E N T S

1957

February	2	.....	1
	9	.....	3
	18	.....	5
	24	.....	6
March	6	.....	8
	14	.....	8
	22	.....	10
April	7	.....	12
	14	.....	13
May	1	.....	15
	12	.....	15
	31	.....	18
	28	.....	19
June	4	.....	19
	22	.....	20
	30	.....	21
July	21	.....	24
	24	.....	25
	31	.....	27
August	7	.....	28
	15	.....	30
	22	.....	32
	31	.....	34
September	4	.....	35
	9	.....	36
	13	.....	38
	29	.....	38
October	9	.....	40
	16	.....	41
	23	.....	43
	30	.....	44



# Contents

v

## 1957

November	7	.....	45
	11	.....	46
	24	.....	47
	26	.....	48
December	6	.....	50
	16	.....	51
	22	.....	51
	27	.....	52

## 1958

January	5	.....	53
	8	.....	53
	18	.....	55
February	12	.....	55
	27	.....	56
March	16	.....	57
	25	.....	58
April	3	.....	60
	20	.....	61
May	3	.....	62
	11	.....	63
June	1	.....	64
	7	.....	65
	20	.....	67
	25	.....	67
July	4	.....	69
	13	.....	71
September	28	.....	72
October	5	.....	73
	14	.....	75
	20	.....	76



# C o n t e n t s

vi

## 1 9 5 8

November	18	.....	76
	25	.....	77
December	10	.....	78
	19	.....	79
	27	.....	80

## 1 9 5 9

January	2	.....	81
	7	.....	82
	13	.....	82
	21	.....	84
	28	.....	85
February	6	.....	86
	13	.....	87
March	5	.....	89
	14	.....	89
	21	.....	90
April	2	.....	91
	11	.....	92
	27	.....	93
May	5	.....	95
	12	.....	96
	22	.....	97
June	3	.....	98
	7	.....	99
	18	.....	100
	28	.....	102
July	7	.....	103
	20	.....	105
August	2	.....	107
	16	.....	108
	24	.....	109





1 9 5 9

September	12	.....	109
	21	.....	110
	25	.....	111
October	5	.....	111
	21	.....	112
	29	.....	114
November	4	.....	114
December	5	.....	115
	9	.....	116
	20	.....	117
	26	.....	118
	30	.....	120

1 9 6 0

January	6	.....	121
	12	.....	122
	19	.....	122
	25	.....	123
	30	.....	125
February	4	.....	125
	9	.....	125
	17	.....	126
	23	.....	127
March	3	.....	128
	12	.....	130
	28	.....	132
April	10	.....	133
	19	.....	134
	23	.....	135
	28	.....	136



1 9 6 0

May	6	.....	137
	16	.....	137
	30	.....	138
August	28	.....	139
September	12	.....	140
	28	.....	141
October	17	.....	142
November	4	.....	143
	26	.....	145
December	17	.....	145
	21	.....	146
	29	.....	147

1 9 6 1

January	27	.....	149
February	7	.....	150
	12	.....	150
	26	.....	152
March	18	.....	152
April	14	.....	153

1 9 6 7

September	1	.....	156
	6	.....	157
	14	.....	159
	20	.....	161
	27	.....	162
October	2	.....	164
	3	.....	166



# Contents

ix

## 1967

October	15 .....	167
	23 .....	170
	29 .....	172
November	9 .....	173
	15 .....	175
December	11 .....	176
	20 .....	178
	27 .....	179

Index .....	182
-------------	-----









February 2, 1957

1

Collège du Sacré-Coeur

Annonay, Ardèche.

Saturday, February 2, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Once again this has gone a bit overtime. I fully intended sending you a line yesterday, but the day didn't have enough hours in it. First of all thanks for your last letter, Mim, of January 22. Glad to hear the cold snap eased up a bit. It must have been severe if it surpassed anything you folks can remember. Even I can recall at least one winter where no one would have dared stay out of doors too long. Over here the newspapers reported the thermometers in the State of New York down around 55 degrees below. Could it possibly have gone that low? It seems incredible. Let us hope you will have some milder weather now, anyway, and that the worst is over. At present here we are breaking records for warm spells in January and February, and I must say it is lovely. The sun has been with us all week and even allowed us to go outside in almost summer clothing. Some have it and some don't. Last year at this very time it was plenty cold here; maybe Providence is blessing our past endurance. Better not talk too soon though. February is a short month, but once in a while one in which almost anything can be expected.

Sunday morning: I guess yesterday wasn't long enough either. We had an unexpected outing yesterday after class - a play in the city theatre. It started around 5:00 p.m., a matinee, and didn't finish till 7:30 p.m. We conducted the students to it, at least those



February 2, 1957

2

of them who had enough money to buy a ticket (150 francs). It was a play by Molière: "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" which I have seen four times now, twice in Paris and twice in Annonay. It is a comedy, a bit of slapstick in places but amusing if well played.

Yesterday too we took down our crib and packed it away for another year. Since a number of the boys helped to build it just before leaving for Christmas vacation, we harnessed their energy again to take it down. It is the custom here to leave the crib in place until the feast of the Purification and to remove it that day.

Speaking of customs, they do not have the blessing of throats on St. Blaise's feast (today). It strikes me as too bad; I always liked that simple ceremony every February 3rd.

By the way, Mom, I forgot to mention in my last letter that we have had a few afternoon lunches in my room recently, the menu consisting of Christmas cake and tea. Is it ever a good cake, and I assure you appreciated by all my guests. We tried a good white wine with it one day, but decided that it tasted better with a good cup of tea. The wine seems to detract from its goodness whereas tea completes it. In any case we certainly thank you for another scrumptious success.

Best to all hands.

Kevin.

\* \* \* \* \*



February 9, 1957

3

Collège du Sacré Coeur, Annonay,  
Saturday, February 9, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

The last letter being a few days late I shall try to make amends with this by putting it in the mail this evening; it should go up to Paris by train tomorrow, and take off on its flight early Monday morning if not sooner. It will probably cross one coming from you, Mom. But that is bound to happen when either one of us has a fixed day to write.

Here's hoping you are all well and that old man winter is sparing you his rigors as he has been doing for us here for the past several days. I can't remember living through a February so mild. The grass is starting to green up, and several buds has shown signs of life. Dear knows what may happen to them before Spring actually comes. Late frosts are not unknown in these parts and at the moment it is anything but late.

I see by the calendar a significant date coming up on Tuesday next. If this letter hasn't arrived at your door by that time, Mom, let me assure you that it carries with it nonetheless all the best wishes for a Happy Birthday. I shall certainly think of you in a special way in my Mass that morning, and pray the Good Lord that your birthdays will be both numerous and happy, each one happier than the last.

Before I forget again do you think you could send me the following addresses, Mom, of people to whom I should send a note acknowledging a letter or a card: 1) the Polito



February 9, 1957

4

family; I imagine it is the Polito's where you do your buying and where I stopped in occasionally during the summer to have a chat. They sent me a lovely card at Christmas. 2) Mr. and Mrs. Pat Gemmel. They too sent me a card and a grand letter with it, which I must answer. 3) Miss Corkery. I remember the house where she is being on Kent Street, but the exact number of it has escaped me. Sorry to bother you with these details, but you are my only source of information for that particular plea. I should also appreciate it if at anytime you hear of someone who expected to have a word from me over here and whom I've forgotten to write, you would let me know. My memory is atrocious for certain things.

Classes go on as usual, in fact there is one coming up in another ten minutes and which will interrupt this epistle. This week we had a battle to put across the use of the Present Perfect and ther Preterite in English. The kids could see readily how "j'ai parlé" can be translated by "I have talked", but weren't so ready to admit that "Ce matin j'ai parlé avec mon ami" had to go into English as "This morning I talked with my friend" and not "I have talked", even though the form of the verb remains the same in French. Difficulties like that seem insurmountable to them at first, but in time and by reading they will come to make the distinction between a definite and an indefinite past, I hope.

Sometimes they make amusing errors without realizing. The other day we were reading about the old fashioned carriages in England where the driver used to sit high up behind





February 18, 1957

5

the passengers with the lines or reins passing over their heads. When it came to writing up an account of the passage we had studied one of the lads had the driver sitting high up behind the passengers with his legs passing over their heads! No doubt we make or have made the same kind of blunders in French. I must say it is a refreshing kind of blunder, after hours of tedious correction. Better run now. Best to all.

\* \* \* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Monday, February 18, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologizes for late letter and acknowledges receipt of one sent to him on Feb. 13th.

News of Kink's wrist feeling much better; of Uncle Joe's sickness and that Bernie will soon be out of the hospital.

Thanks very much for the remembrance card of Father Meagher. I must confess it struck a sad note as it slipped out of your letter. I little thought our few visits together last summer were our last. It is a fine picture of him, though, isn't it? One I shall keep in my breviary for some time.

Things go on about as usual here. Our mild weather gave out recently, though we can't complain of anything very severe. This morning we awoke to a world drenched with half snow and half rain, and as I write this (5:30 p.m.) the two are still battling it out to see who will prevail.



February 18, 1957

6

Classes are about the same, too, though we have a long weekend coming up just before Mardi Gras. A set of examinations unfortunately have to be passed before the recess; I say unfortunately both for the students who have to write them and the professors who have to correct the papers. In order to arouse a bit of enthusiasm over a review of the vocabulary we have learned since Christmas I divided one of the classes today into two teams, the English and the Americans, respectively, allotting a point for every word correctly translated. As the questions passed from team to team, the score mounted, the enthusiasm of the participants also rose, in fact to such a degree that the two nations were practically throwing punches by the time the bell rang, not only at each other but at their own unfortunate compatriots who didn't know the answers too well. They are very anxious for a return match tomorrow, but for the sake of international relations I think the formula will have to be varied slightly in favor of a pacific co-existence. The ups and downs of a teacher!

Closing remarks.

\* \* \* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur

Annonay, Ardèche, Sunday, Feb. 24, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

It's rather rare that we go out on Sunday work here with the result that this morning is often relatively free, and therefore an excellent time to take pen in hand, or rather machine in hand and tap out a letter. Of



February 24, 1957

7

course there is always something waiting to be done, such as tests to be corrected, classes prepared and so on, but these will have to wait until this afternoon, or at least until a little later.

It is good to know you are reasonably well; let us hope the same continues. Before very long the real winter weather will be over, in fact the back of the cold spell must surely be about broken now. It is quite mild here, though we can see snow on the hills around. The difference in altitude accounts for it. At Annonay we are about 900 or so feet above sea level, but a half hour's drive brings you to around 2500. Not infrequently it is raining here while the towns on the heights nearby are in the midst of a blizzard. Which means also that the roads while often just wet here are blocked higher up by the snow. But that is an existing condition which the people of the area take for granted, being used to hills and valleys.

Acknowledges a lovely box from Sister Mary Agnes and a letter from 89 Wellington Street, the result of a communal effort on the part of Mike, Elizabeth and Peggy.

Attended last night a performance by a troupe of school children from Marseille in the local theatre.

Observations on the French political scene.

\* \* \* \* \*



March 6, 1957

8

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Wednesday, March 6, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Mardi Gras holiday will end tomorrow. Letter was written on Ash Wednesday, one of four fast days in France.

Acknowledges letters with Mass stipends.

The pile of examinations to be corrected is slowly dwindling; with a little effort it should diminish to almost nothing this afternoon. There were 60 to start with but I think we are over the half-way mark by now. Each paper taking about ten minutes it runs into time. They are doing about as I expected with a couple of exceptions here and there, lads who have slipped behind in their work since Christmas. Low marks now may make them dig in somewhat for the set of exams at Easter. That is the theory anyway, and, alas, often remains only theory.

Sorry to hear of Margaret's recent illness.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Thursday, March 14, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Once again a bit late with no other excuse than that of the usual schedule. Here's hoping this finds you all well, no early spring colds or grippe. Everyone is well here, and enjoying a splendid spell of warm weather. Yesterday, so this morning's paper had it, was the warmest





March 14, 1957

9

March 13 since 1880, which may be a significant record. In any case we are surrounded by fruit blossoms at the moment. The apricot and plum trees are at their best; the peach trees are just beginning to open up and even the cherries which normally are in bloom much later, are showing signs of swelling buds. Elderly natives say it's much too early and that we may pay dearly for this fine weather. Perhaps so, but we can always hope not.

In a way it is an advantage to be in a country where the Spring is early. The dreary dark days of January and February come to an end much sooner. But it has its disadvantages as well, particularly in the teaching profession, for the kids contract more or less serious cases of spring fever, which one can count on lasting until the end of June. So we find ourselves in addition to the regular difficulties of putting complicated grammar rules across in a half convincing manner, obliged to keep them from climbing out of the windows to better enjoy nature's beauty. Most of them would sooner enjoy the lovely sunshine and apricot blossoms than tackle the various rises of the reflexive and reciprocal pronoun - and I guess, after all, who can blame them?

Our Bishop is coming to the school next Monday for an official visit, the first since the Basilians took over the administration last September. The kids have gotten wind of his passage already and have talked themselves into believing that His Excellency will declare at least a half holiday. They are going to be very disappointed if he doesn't come across.

Father Terence McLaughlin, the Procurator General, paid us a visit last weekend, arriving



March 22, 1957

10

Saturday and leaving again Monday. He is in Rome now, where he will stay until sometime in July or August. He comes over every year to regulate affairs of the Community at the Vatican, and then goes back to give his regular series of lectures on Canon Law at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies at Toronto. He took the Queen Elizabeth at Halifax this time, the New York tug-boats being on strike.

Did you ever come across the word "nack-nicks?" Neither did until the other day when one of the lads asked me what it meant, not in the least conscious that he was slightly deforming "nick-nacks" which we had just learned the day previously. C'est la vie.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Friday, March 22, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Another weekly greeting, though a bit overdue, I'm afraid. Please forgive the delay. It's not on account of sickness, thanks be. We are all fine, in fact, except for one case of measles, a lad in first year who contracted them last week and was promptly isolated in a room away at one end of the building. He is practically better now, though will be in quarantine until Sunday. Only the infirmarian and myself had permission to visit him, she to look after his medical needs, and I to comfort him in one way or another, he being one of the minor seminarians here at the college of whom I have the charge. His red spots reminded me of my own session years ago, and of the semi-darkened room.



Yesterday a bunch of us went on a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Curé of Ars, about 80 miles from Annonay. We chartered a bus for the occasion, the pilgrims including the minor seminarians (kids) who will later on go into a major seminary and study for the priesthood and the group of altar boys. There were about 45 in all. We left bright and early, 6:00 a.m. and arrived at the shrine of the saint a little before 9:00 a.m. The Superior, Father Charles Roume, said the Mass at the altar where the Curé's body is enshrined and preached a little sermon to the boys. After breakfast and a visit to the rectory, which is a real lesson in poverty for all of us, we drove on to a place called Châtillon, where St. Vincent de Paul was once pastor. Dinner was in picnic style along the roadside, on the fresh grass in the lovely sun we have been having of late, in a setting of white and pink plum and peach blossoms. Everyone was in high spirits as you can imagine. Those lucky enough to be on the trip thought gleefully of their poor mates back at the college and didn't hesitate to say as much. When French kids find something they enjoy, they really enjoy it, giving expression to their delight in every way. They all behaved very well the whole day long, in fact we were complimented at one stage of the tour on such a fine bunch of boys. On the way back we took a detour to see a most beautiful 16th century Gothic church, built to honour the remains of a royal family, Marguerite of Austria and her husband, Philibert, one of the dukes of Burgundy. It was splendid. Around 7:00 p.m. we arrived back at the College, pretty worn out, but happy nonetheless. The kids didn't need any persuasion to go to be later on.



April 7, 1957

12

Thanks for your last letter, Mom, of Mar. 11. It is good to hear Bernie is well enough to be out at the lads. Hello to Aunt Lucy. Ask her if she has much confidence in the medical knowledge of "Dr. Brown!" Best to all

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Sunday, April 7, 1957.

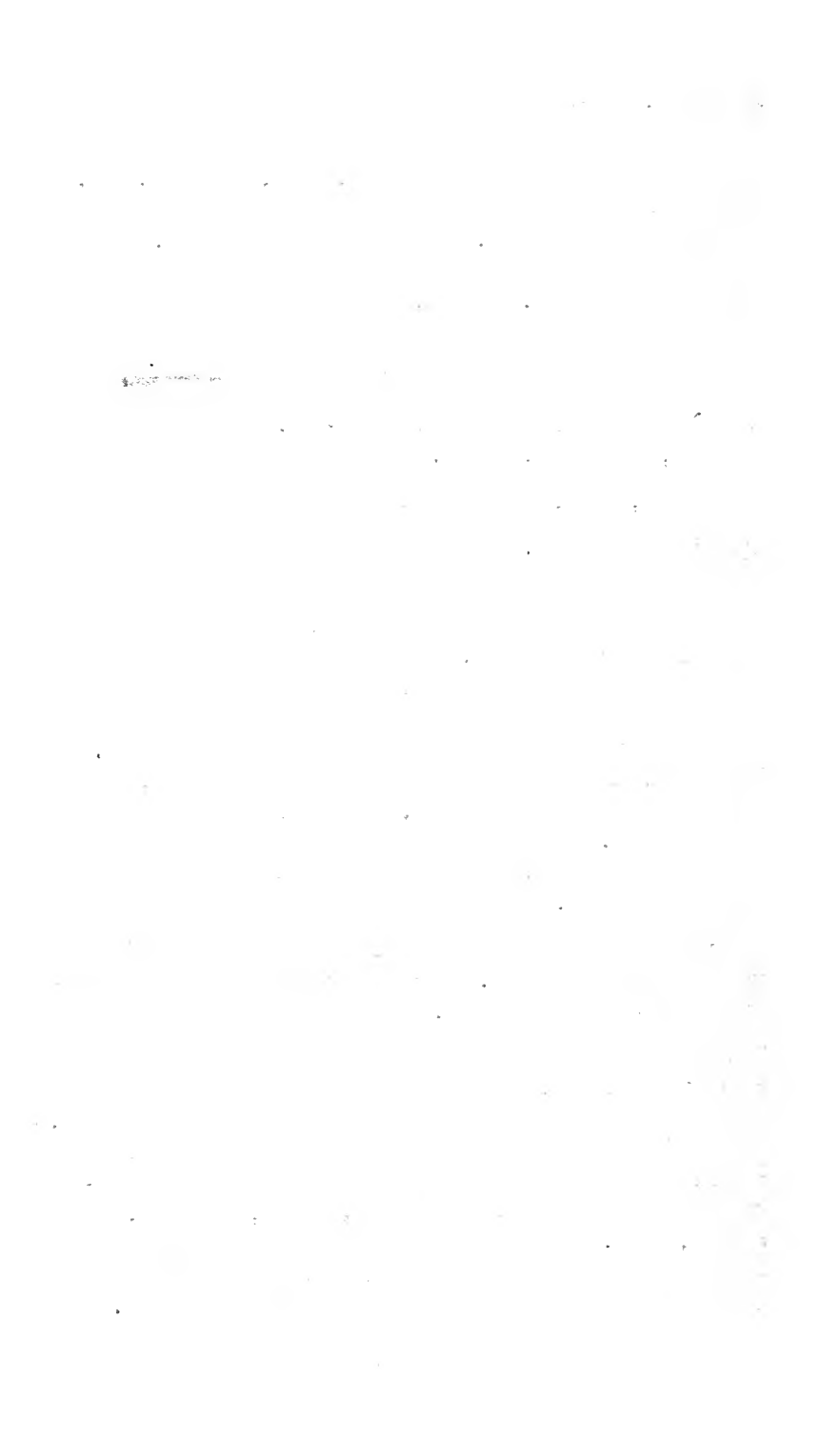
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks.

This year again we shall be going out here and there to help in the parish. The Easter work is quite heavy, particularly the last three days of Holy Week, for the ceremonies are rather elaborate and the confessions more numerous than at any other time of the year. I expect to go down again to Le Cheylard, the same place as last year, though, with this difference, that there will be two of us going there this time, at least for Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

Describes work of the last full week of classes before Palm Sunday. School closes on the Tuesday after Palm Sunday.

Fathers George Beaune and Charles Principe are the lucky ones: they are going down to Rome for Easter (about 18 hours by train from here). They will undoubtedly spend some time in other Italian cities before coming back for the re-opening of school: Florence, Pisa, Venice, Milan, etc., those centres that are still quite fresh in my memory from the trip of 1954 and from which you probably have a card or two.





April 14, 1957

13

The rest of us will stay here at Annonay, as far as I know, keeping the home fires burning.

Writes of the excitement in the French papers over the state visit of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip to Paris.

Experiences in teaching English, e.g. rolled oats cooked as porridge which is unknown in France.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Palm Sunday afternoon 1957  
(& Gertrude's anniversary).

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Things are quiet in the school at the moment; the boarders are all out, some at the football game, some at the movies, and I think most of the teachers are elsewhere as well. The only sound is the wind in the spruce trees under my window; a cold wind it is too, almost freezing. Our lovely spring weather gave way last week to a chilly spell which still has us shivering. I don't think any harm has been done here by the frost, but on the heights about us the leaves and blossoms may have received a set back.

This morning we had the entire student body present for the blessing of the palms. The ceremony began outside at a temporary altar erected under the plane trees in the seniors' yard. From there we went in procession, each with his palm, to the main chapel of the school where the Mass for Palm Sunday was celebrated by Father Wally Platt. Since nearly all of



April 14, 1957

14

the kids got to confession yesterday they were able to fulfill their Easter obligations today. They will be going home this coming Tuesday at noon for their holidays. Needless to say they are looking forward to that. We are too, for that matter!

Acknowledges letters and Mass stipend.

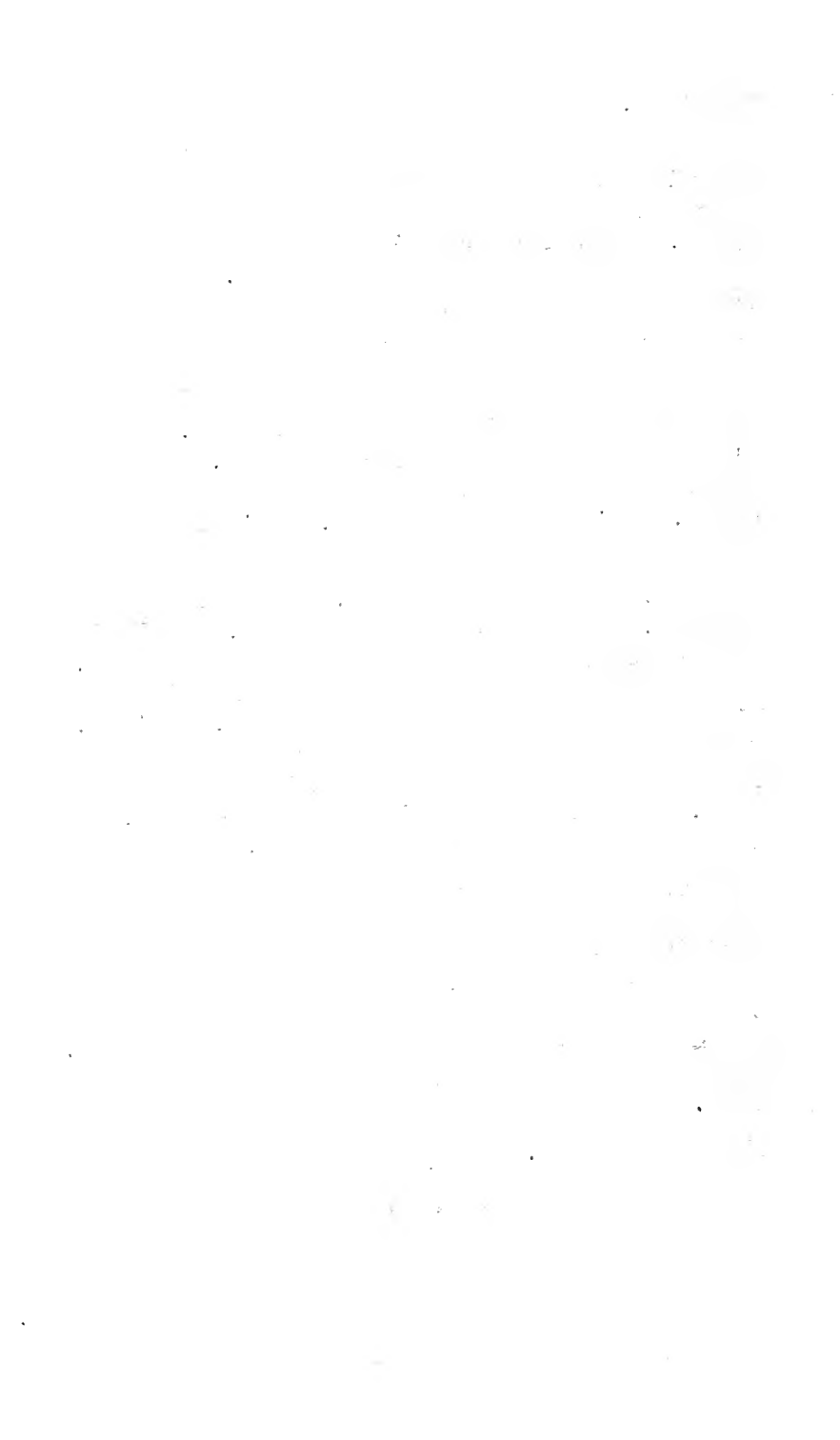
This morning I said Mass for Gertrude. And I'm sure you all remembered her too. Is it possible that 14 years have elapsed since her death. It's hard to believe, isn't it?

We have a Canadian lad with us these days for a visit, a chap from London, Ontario: Jack Farrell. He used to be a Basilian, but left the Community as a scholastic some years ago. At present he is studying for his PhD in history at the University of London, England. He hopes to go back to his home town and teach in the new Christ the King College there this Fall. He paid us a visit last Easter too, though only for two or three days.

Received a letter from Jacques Deglesne the other day in which he mentioned getting Christmas cards from you and how delighted the two of them were. They still remember the very pleasant visit they had in Lindsay and at the farm before entering the Novitiate. Apparently their English has improved considerably.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*



May 1, 1957

15

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
May 1, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks. Acknowledges letters and  
Easter gifts.

Yesterday three of our junior seminarians  
came over to the college in the afternoon  
and helped us set up a shrine to Our Lady  
for the month of May. It reminded me of old  
times when we used to scout the fences and  
corners on the look out for daffodils,  
trilliums and whatever would befit a vase  
on the little May altar.

Observations on the weather in France and  
in Canada.

Fathers George Beaune and Charles Principe  
are not back yet, but we expect them in to-  
night or tomorrow. They sent us a card from  
Rome and seemed to be enjoying everything,  
including the Italian spaghetti and wine!  
They are the lucky ones this year, to have been  
at St. Peter's for Easter.

Closing remarks.

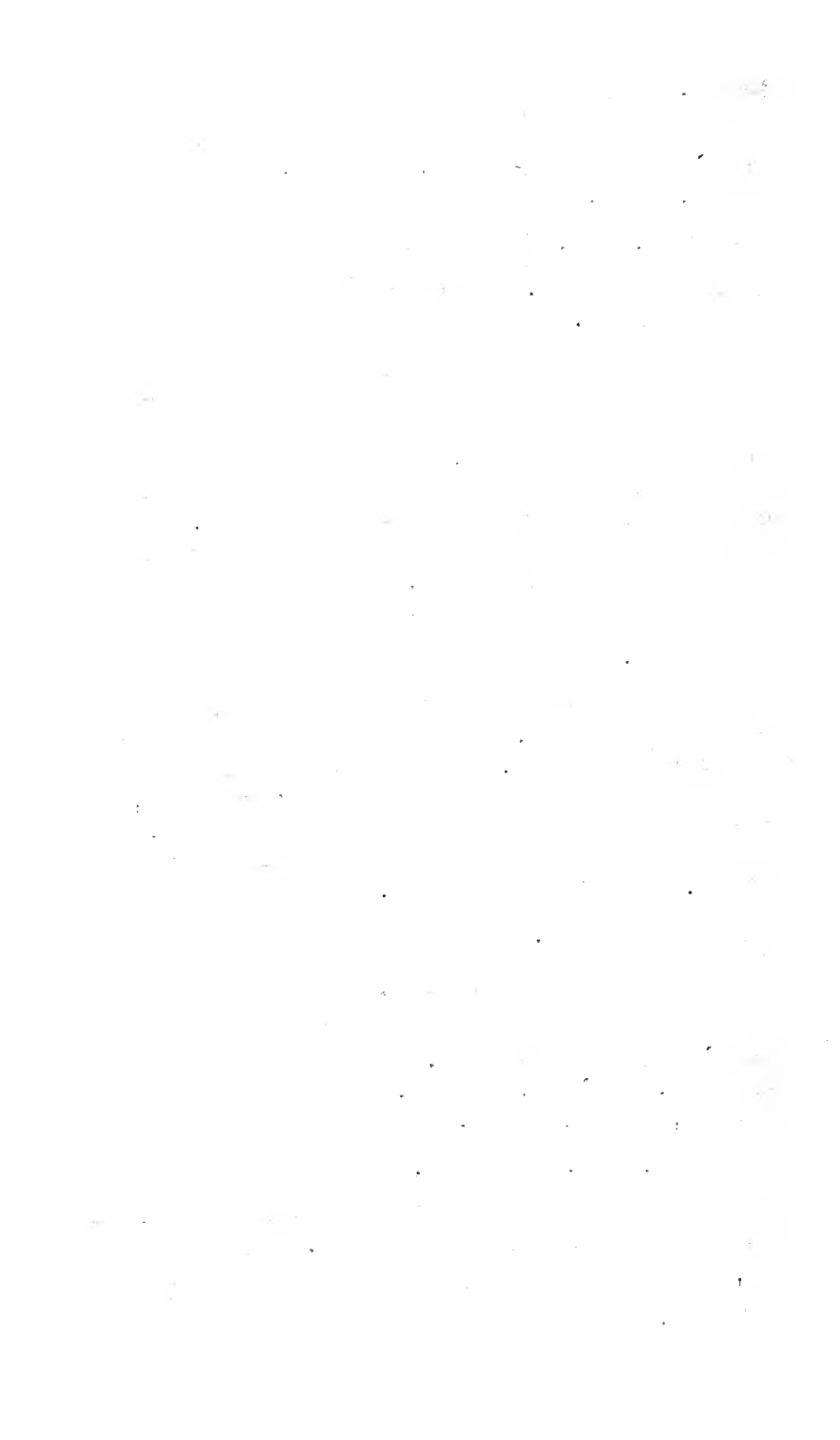
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Collège du Sacré-Coeur,  
Annonay, Ardèche, France.  
Sunday, May 12, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks deal with interval since last  
letter and apologize for delay.

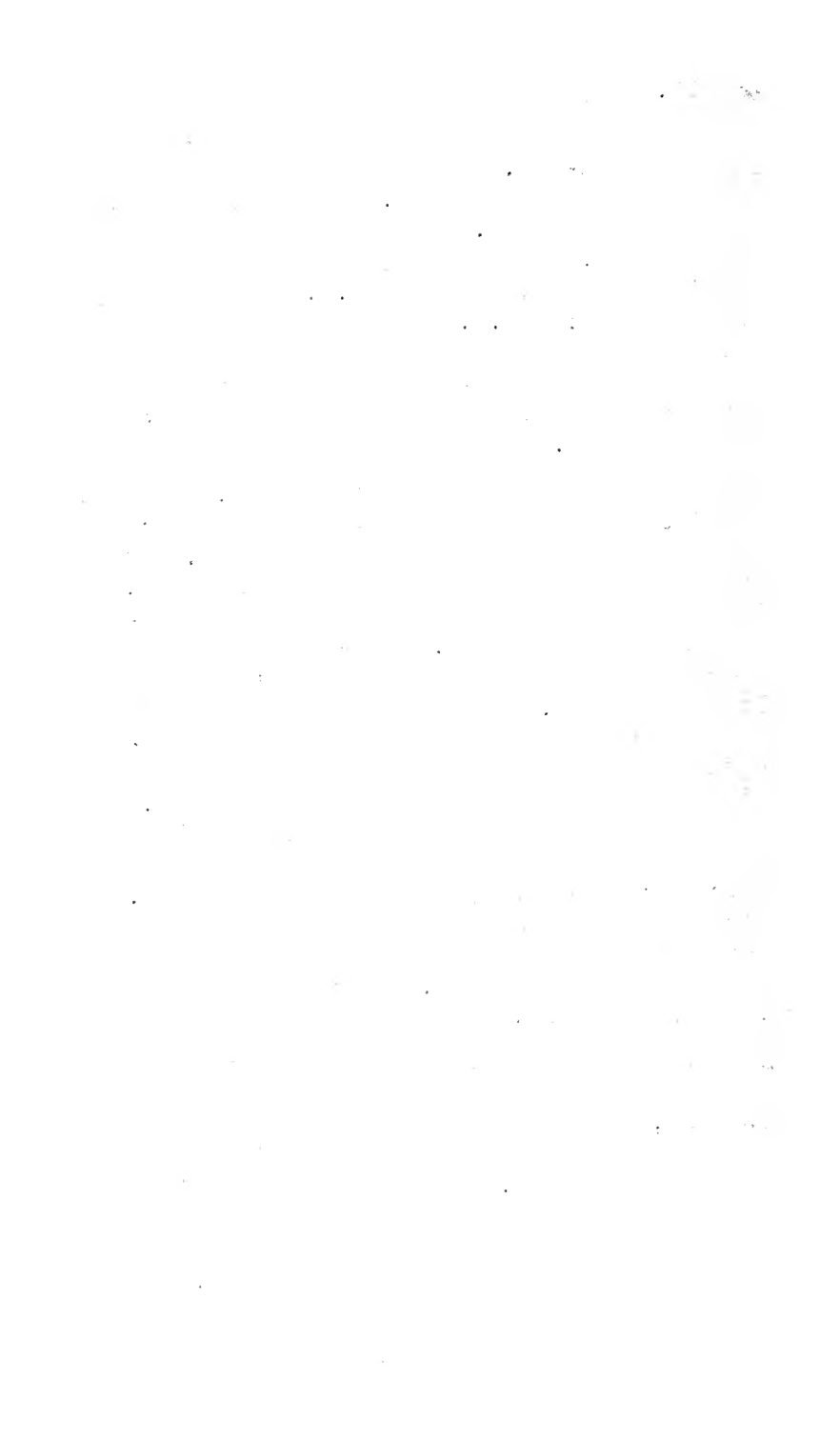
It's rather quiet around the College this  
morning. Most of the boarders have gone home



for the week-end, at least those that live not too far from Annonay. There are not more than about 25 left. Week-end is perhaps too exaggerated, for they only have from Saturday evening after study (7:00 p.m.) until Monday morning at 8:00 a.m.; nevertheless it is surprising the number that refer to that brief holiday as "un week-end" - they leave the word in English, though give it a decided Gallic accent.

All the priests of our diocese here, Viviers, met this week in council with the bishop; half of them from Monday to Wednesday, and the other half from Wednesday to Saturday. Father Charles Roume went from here to represent our Community. Apparently a very searching census has been going on for the last two years, and the results having all been tabulated and charted were to be discussed and measures to be taken to remedy different situations that need remedying. The hope is that the manpower will be better distributed for the needs not only of the diocese but of all the dioceses in France. There are certain sections where priests are more plentiful than they need to be for the number of the faithful, and others where the lack is shocking.

Another mammoth meeting has been going on in Paris of all the Cardinals and Bishops of the country, again with the hope of deciding something the bettering of the condition of catholicism in France. I notice last week's TIME has a short article on that meeting and gives the readers to believe that nothing very effective can be expected to come of it. The figures given are not quite accurate and the





facts not too well founded. But that is not surprising for TIME; approximations are sufficient for it to make up a story that reads well, and besides it never loses an opportunity to take a crack at France. I has been very anti-French ever since the war.

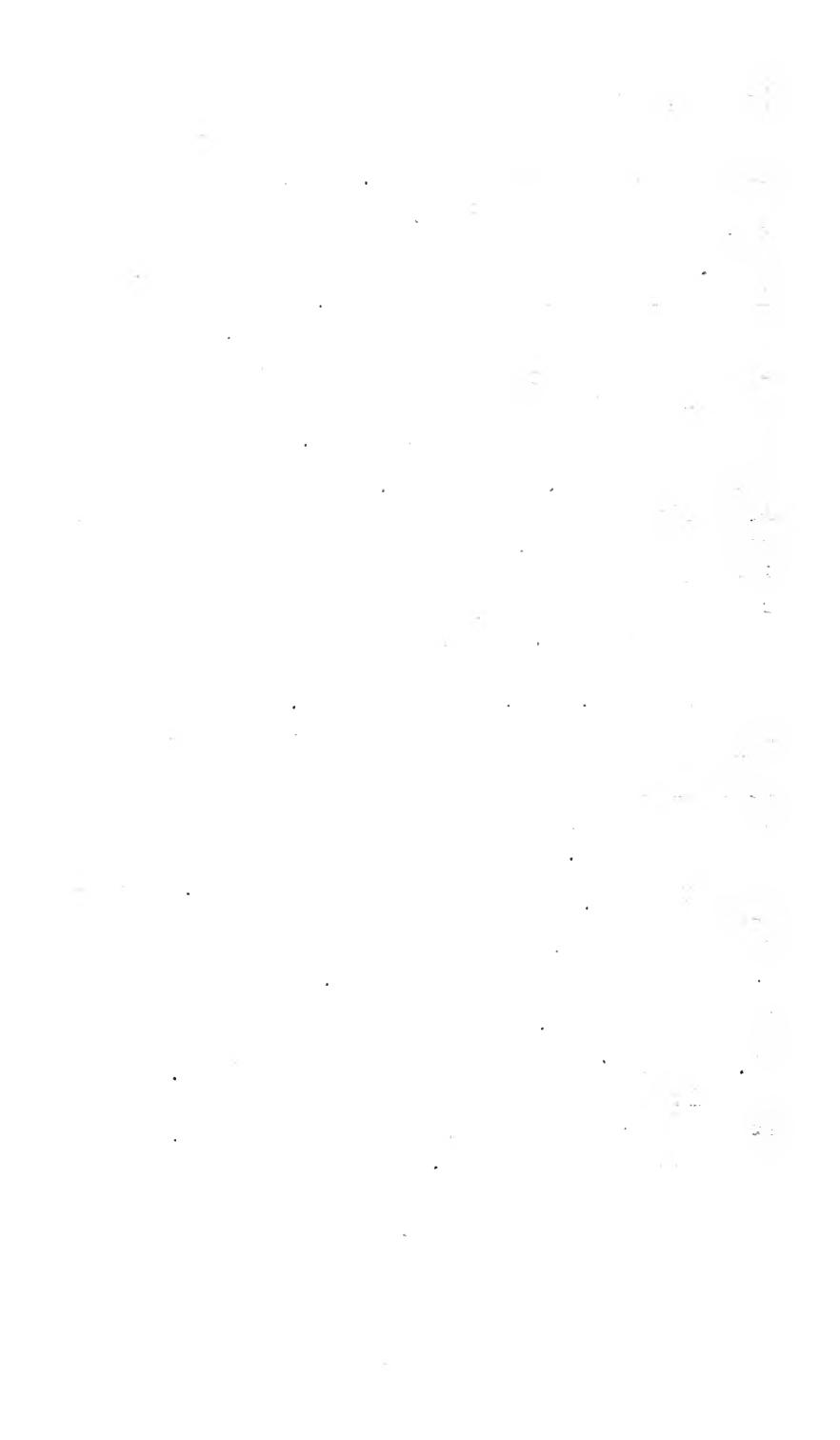
Asks for a pad to put on the kneeler of a prieu-dieu in his room where some 20 or so kneel for confession each week.

This past week, Wednesday, we celebrated the Armistice day of the last war. It was a holiday for the kids, though they had to parade in the morning through the town and up to the cementery to lay a wreath on some tombs of fallen soldiers. In the afternoon we had a sort of field day for them here on the grounds, games, races, etc., with prizes. And what do you think was the first prize? - a bottle of Champagne! (and that for each race!) It made me chuckle to think what a far cry there is between the prizes here on such an occasion and back home. But I suppose every country has its own particular characteristics. Actually it wasn't real champagne but rather sparkling wine, which has somewhat the same effect though costs much less.

Closing remarks.

PS. Mother's Day in France is May 26th. Is it the same date in Canada? If by chance it has already passed, my apologies Mom, and my belated best wishes.

\* \* \*



May 31, 1957

18

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Tuesday, May 31, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks acknowledge letters. News of a new television set at home call forth remarks on television in Canada and France. Inquires about an excursion to Douro.

Sorry to have missed out on Mother's Day. I had a notion it was the same date as over here, May 26th. In recompense, I shall say Mass for both of you tomorrow morning, a votive Mass in honour of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

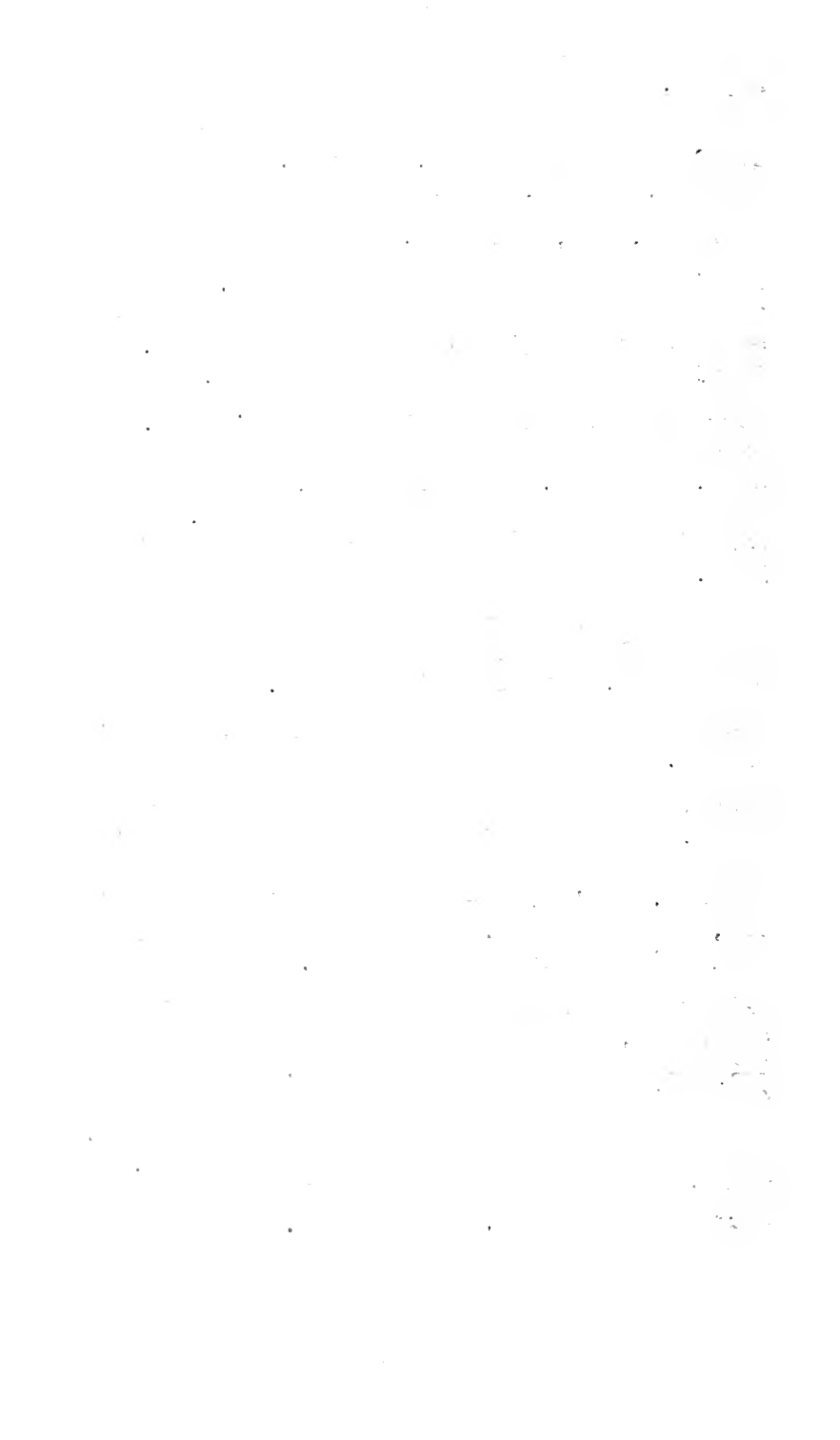
The news about Olive Paquette is sad indeed and I shall surely continue to keep her in my prayers, particularly at Mass.

Recalls the Musical Festivals at St. Andrew's Church.

Received a letter from Father Charles Lavery today. He is due in Paris June 28 but won't be able to visit Annonay before the latter part of July. It's toss-up whether I'll get seeing him, at least here, as the summer course in Spain will begin about July 15.

Father Wally Platt is due to sail from Le Havre on July 4, so he should be in Toronto around the 12th (not to parade I hope). At the moment he is very tired out from the constant work of preparing for his exams next Tuesday. You could give him a memento in your Mass. I know what he is going through having experienced it last year. Best to all.

\* \* \*



May 28, 1957

19

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Tuesday, May 28, 1957

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologizes for a late letter.

Remarks on examinations and the difficulty  
of setting a good paper.

Wednesday morning. Observations on weather  
in Annonay.

Father Wally Platt wrote his exam yesterday  
afternoon, the "Version" which is by far the  
hardest one we have to face for the Licentiate.  
The text was a very stiff one, from an author  
in the 17th century, so the poor lad doesn't  
feel too elated over the possible results.  
He has worked so hard this year it will be a  
great disappointment for him if he does not  
succeed.

No news as yet of the summer course in Spain.  
I'm still waiting for information from the  
University of Santander before deciding whether  
to go there or to Madrid. The climate in the  
capital during July and August is not particu-  
larly enjoyable, so they say, and since my  
main purpose is going to study I shouldn't  
like to be hampered by sweltering temperatures.

Closing remarks deal with the fall of the  
government in France.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
June 4, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks deal with wretched weather in  
Annonay. Acknowledges letter of May 28th.



June 4, 1957

20

Sunday we had the annual reunion of the Old Boys of the College. It consisted in a High Mass at 10:30 a.m., a meeting of the executive, and a banquet which lasted from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. It wasn't that we ate so much, although the meal was an excellent one, but the service was quite unhurried and the speeches at champagne time rather numerous. There were about 50 or 60 in attendance, a few less than previous years. Most of the former students are scattered here and there all over France now and don't always find it possible to pick up and leave. The weather wasn't too favourable, but most of the doings were inside anyway.

Closing remarks deal with examinations at Annonay and new television set at home.

PS. I'm not sure of the date of Father's Day, Dad, but very best wishes for it, and extend the same to the other fathers in the clan. Over here it is called "La Fête des Pères" and even we feel included!

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Cœur, Annonay  
Saturday, June 22, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologies for delaying this letter. Describes the work of teachers as the end of the year approaches.

Acknowledges letter of June 9th, with Mass stipend.

We all rejoiced here over Father Wally Platt's recent success and Father Charlie Principe's as well. They both came through their exams





June 22, 1957

21

at the University of Lyons with flying colours. It was Father Platt's last exam, so he is now a full-fledged "licencié" which adds L.ès L. to his academic titles. Father Principe will have two more certificates to prepare next year. When you see Father Platt this summer you take a rise out of him by calling him "un licencié ès lettres en langues vivantes étrangères."

The trip up to get Sister sounds like a wonderful idea. It should be at once a lovely drive for those who go, and a most pleasant way for Sister to come down to Lindsay. The same trip by train is a pretty long one, and often very hot. Should they have time while in Sudbury they might like to stop in at St. Charles College where Fathers Francis McCarty, or George Silvester, Bill Brown, Tom Lawlor, Bill Conway or Bill O'Brien would give them a real welcome, I'm sure. (I can't recall who else is there).

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
June 30, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

All is quiet once again in our big house since the boys have all gone home. This time it is for a period of three months. We had our last classes yesterday morning (Saturday) and devoted the afternoon to the reading of the prize list and the awarding of the different prizes. At about 2:30 p.m. we grouped the whole student body in the theatre with the 20



or so parents who were there. With the teachers seated on the stage the director of studies read out the names of the winning candidates in all the different subjects, and these came forward to receive a book from the hands of the Superior, Father Charles Roume. It was a simple enough little ceremony, but which made a certain impression on all present. It reminded me somewhat of the convocation exercise for the B.A. in Toronto; and also (though it must be admitted there is some distance between the two pictures evoked) of a scene in Tom Sawyer (I believe it was) where at a similar academic closing of the school year, a cat was lowered by a string just to the height of the master's toupet, and drawn up again to a beam overhead, toupet and all. That didn't happen yesterday, in fact, nor could it have very well, since Father Roume's hair is authentic, but the setting was ideal nonetheless. After a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel, the boys dispersed to the four winds and are probably still dispersing as I write these few lines. We shall see those who live in Annonay now and again during the vacation, but the others are gone until the 1st of October. Some, in fact, are gone for good, either because they have been told it is useless to continue, given their impossible marks, or because they will be attending a different school next year. The latter is the case of eleven of the minor seminarians whom I had in direction this year; they will continue their studies now in one of the Minor Seminaries in the diocese, at Aubenas, to be exact, which is about 75 miles south of here. The reason that they came to the College in the first place was to save scholarship. Our school is recognized by the



State as capable of teaching scholarship students, whereas the Minor Seminary wasn't last September, when those boys were due to begin their secondary studies. I understand it is now, and that we shall receive no replacements for those eleven kids in first year.

Already confreres are leaving for one thing or another. Two of our men left for Paris this morning where they are going to attend a convention of Sacred Church Music. Fathers Wally Platt and Charlie Principe are also leaving for Paris, but continuing on to London where the latter will be doing parish work for most of the summer. Father Platt takes the boat at Southampton on July 4. He hope to be able to pay you a visit towards the end of July on his way to Ottawa. He plans to stay overnight at Lindsay, but at the rectory with Father Carroll, if Father Carroll doesn't mind. He will drop you a note ahead of time letting you know what day he will be along, but does not want you to go to any trouble whatever. No need to meet him at the station, he says, as he knows the way over to the house.

Had a letter from Mary Kennedy this week, which I must try to answer today. We may be able to arrange a visit in Madrid, though it's not certain that I shall stay there that long - August 30th. It depends on whether I take both summer sessions or only one, and the Superior hasn't decided yet.

Better close now. Best to all in Our Lord.

\* \* \*



July 21, 1957

24

Colegio Mayor "Jose Antonio"  
Civdad Universitaria, Madrid  
Sunday, July 21, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks.

The courses seem to be both interesting and worthwhile as far as one can judge after a week of attendance. They include the history of Spain in the 18th and 19th centuries, the geography of the country, in particular the main cities, lectures on Spanish art and architecture, literature, translation exercises and pronunciation or conversation classes. The lectures take place from 9-12 in the morning, followed two days a week by a guided visit to the famous art gallery "El Prado". The whole afternoon is free, and since supper is not served until 10:00 p.m. it is immensely long. A part of it is spent indoors, however, where it is cool. The sun is really too strong to do much walking about downtown between 1:00 and 5:00 p.m.; but the evenings are glorious. Just enough of the day's heat remains to take the chill off the cool breeze that in the course of the night brings the temperature down considerably for a fresh start, as it was, the following day. The air is also very dry. Far from fatiguing you, as does hot clammy weather, it seems to have a very invigorating effect. Some of the people here complain of the heat, but I wonder what they would do in the hot, heavy, sultry weather, that we sometimes experience in Southern Ontario.

Madrid is truly a lovely city. They seem to have gone all out to make it as striking as possible for the visitor. Its huge and de-





July 21, 1957

25

lightful parks, broad avenues decorated with trees, shrubs and flowers, relatively big buildings and exquisitely smart shop windows make it probably the least European city of Europe. It would be much more in its place in the United States. For that reason it is not particularly Spanish in its character, doesn't have any of that quaint antiquity that you find in much older Spanish cities such as Toledo and Sevilla. It must be an overwhelming experience for someone from a small country town where things have not noticeably changed since the days of the Moors to come to the glamorous capital. One can't help thinking that its brilliance is artificial and put on, and regretting that the city were not more typically Castillian; but after all, it is their capital and must therefore reflect their own personal tastes to a certain extent.

There is a bull fight this afternoon at 6:00 o'clock which I may attend. It's not one of the big fights as the bulls are only two or three years old and supposed to be less exciting. Shall tell you of it in the next letter.

\* \* \*

Colegio Mayor "Jose Antonio"  
Civdad Universitaria, Madrid, Spain  
Wed. July 24, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Tomorrow morning bright and early we strike out in buses for a five day tour of Old Castille; so a line or two would seem to be in order just before leaving. There will hardly be any chance to write en route.



First of all thanks so much for your last letter; it arrived Monday morning, so the address was quite correct. Dad is probably home by now from his stay at Ryan's. Hope he did not overdo it working at the hay. There aren't many tougher jobs on the farm, particularly considering the heat that is almost certain at that time of year.

Here is a brief preview of the tour we are undertaking this week; if you have your map of Spain handy you can follow the itinerary. Tomorrow at 8:30 a.m. we leave for Segovia, passing by La Granja on the way. At Segovia we shall visit the castle and the aqueduct, and the cathedral, all of which are important monuments in Castillian history. We spend the night there and take a bad road, i.e. rough and bumpy, to another castle, Turégano, north of Segovia and on to another one, still farther north, Peñafial, also by a 3-rate (or lower) road. From there we take a better highway west to Valladolid, which is important mainly for its museum and the house of Cervantes, author of Don Quixote. We shall spend the night of the 26th there. Then on to a small town, Toro, whose church is supposed to be a real curiosity; on to Zenora for the night of the 27th. The next day will be spent going to and visiting Salamanca, one of the oldest universities in Spain. The next day, the 29th, we shall come to Avila, and then back to Madrid. It will be a tiring trip, but very worthwhile, as our professors are going along too, to explain the different things of interest.

Closing remarks give description of bull fight. Matadors were of "bushleague" quality.



July 31, 1957

27

Colegio Mayor "Jose Antonio"  
Cividad Universitaria, Madrid  
Wed. July 31, 1957,

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks. Acknowledges letter and Mass stipedn.

Your letter was waiting when we returned Monday evening around 9:00 p.m. from the five day tour by bus of Old Castilla. We had a very enjoyable and instructive trip, but a tiring one for we were on the go most of the time. What a difference it made to have the professors explain the historical and artistic interest of the different castles, cathedrals, and small churches that we saw! I had visited most of them twice before, but had not benefitted nearly so much as this last time. It was not so much a pleasure trip as an extension into reality of the courses we are studying here at the University. It was also interesting for me to see the farmers at work in the country as we went along. It is harvest time here, which means both cutting and threshing time. The fields stretch as far as the eye can see and are sown mostly in wheat and barley, some oats but not much. Most of them were sown by hand as the grain in many places was growing between, in, and around any number of rocks and boulders. It is cut by hand, not by a scythe either, but by sickle and bound into sheaves (no twine, but a band. I thought to myself, one would have to know how to make a band in this country). The sheaves are not stoked but just laid in piles. Apparently there is no danger of them growing



July 31, 1957

28

for the air is as dry as dust here day and night, no rain, no dew. By carts and donkeys they draw the sheaves to the nearest village, to the outskirts and pile them in a huge field of threshing floors. There other people are at work, men and women, driving either mules, donkeys or oxen around and around on the countless threshing floors. The team drags a kind of flat wooden bob sleigh which rubs the dry ears enough to make the grain pop out. Others fork away the straw and put the grain and hulls through a fanning mill. That's what they mean by "la cosecha" over here, harvest. It's really another world, and it seems a very old one. Beside the bright lights and big cars of Madrid it is a striking contrast.

Closing remarks.

PS. Shall be leaving to go back to France on August 15.

\* \* \*

Madrid, Wednesday, August 7, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Have just come back from shopping downtown, 9:30 p.m. and have another half hour to wait until supper time. What a country! Hope to get this in the mail tonight as tomorrow looks like a full day: classes till noon and a trip to the Escorial at 2:30 p.m., about 30 miles from here, which will occupy us all afternoon. The Escorial was Philip II's idea in the 16th century. He wanted a combination Royal Palace, Monastery and Pantheon for the Spanish Royalty, so he had the immense edifice built which we





August 7, 1957

29

are going to visit in detail tomorrow. You may have a postcard of it; I can't imagine not having sent you one, as it is one of the musts for tourists. We shall have our own professors again as guides. They are much better than the regular hired guides, more personal and friendly, and ever so much more up on their history, art, etc. This will be our last guided tour outside the city of Madrid, as the time is getting short now. Summer School will be over next Thursday.

This morning we all went down again to the art museum, El Prado, for a last visit. Friday morning we shall be going through one of the modern arts museums, studying contemporary Spanish art. Everything at the Prado is more or less classical, 16th and 17th century painters such as Velazquez, Muriello, Goya, etc. It will be interesting to see what has been and is going on in art in our century. Friday night we are to have an additional entertainment. On the lawn in front of the College there are to take place some typical Spanish dances of the region of Castille. I am looking forward to that very much as their folkdances are delightful - lively, graceful and extremely colourful.

Last Thursday we went down to the city of Toledo about 50 miles south of Madrid and spent the day admiring its many and varied treasures. But it was the hottest they have had in at least thirty years. I could well believe it as I nearly melted away, cassock and all: 107 degrees in the shade and 127 in the sun. We tried to stay out of the sun as much as possible but it wasn't always possible,



August 15, 1957

30

running here and there seeing the different masterpieces in architecture, painting, etc. What a delightful sunset we enjoyed that night, not that it was so beautiful but the fact that the blasted thing was finally getting out of the sky! Our bus driver was the smartest of the whole lot: while we chased about after Moorish archways, Gothic pillars, El Greco paintings, he parked the bus in the shade and stretched out underneath it. We have had a few pretty warm days in Madrid lately, but today it has eased up a bit, at least there is a cool breeze in the evening.

Acknowledges letter from Anne.

Had a letter some time ago from Father Wally Platt. He apparently made his Ottawa trip (which he had planned via Lindsay) earlier than he expected and via Rochester. But hopes to come down some Saturday on weekend work. It will likely be in August. Better close now and see what is on the menu.

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Colegio Mayor "Jose Antonio"  
Civdad Universitaria, Madrid, España  
August 15, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

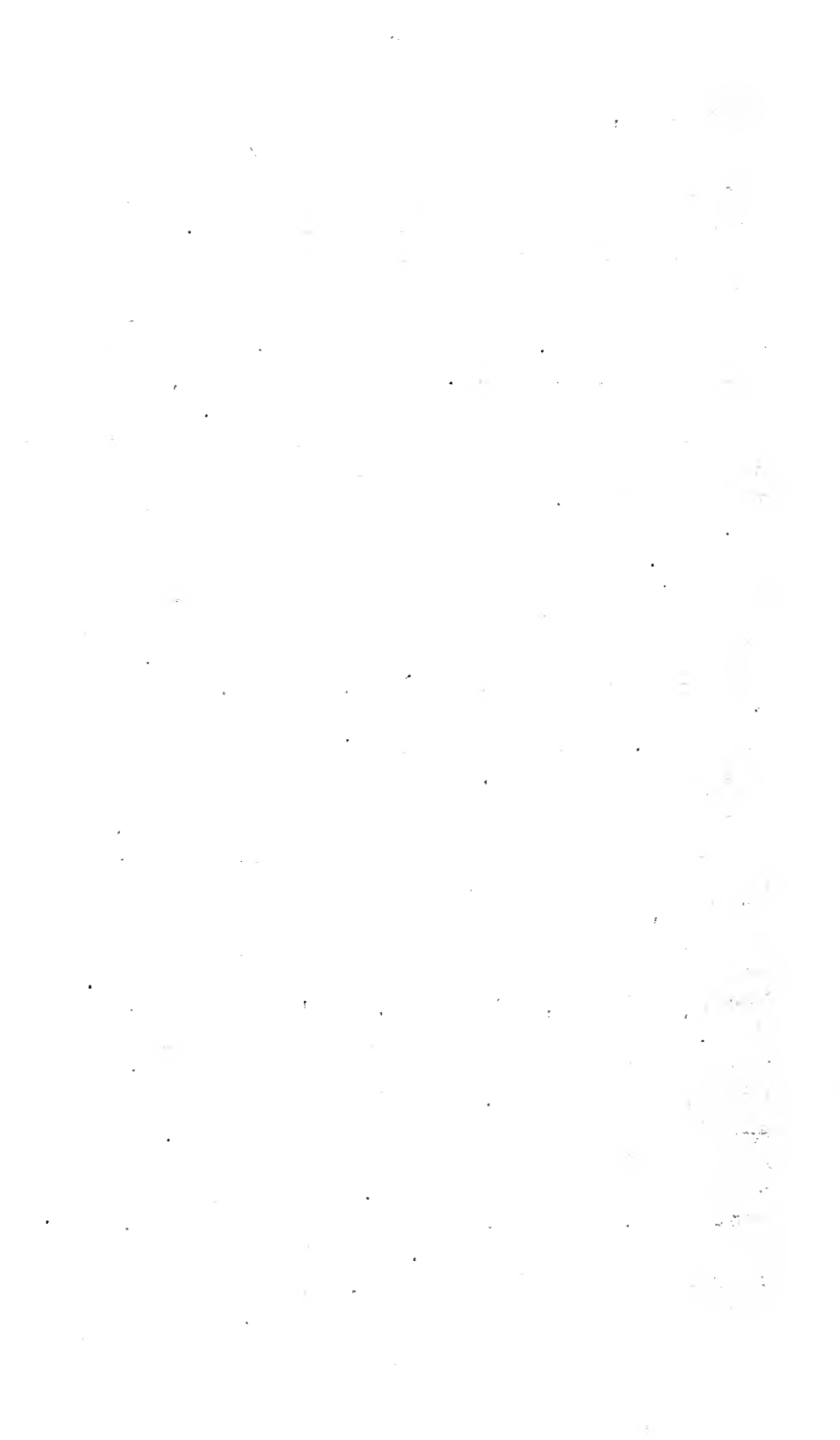
A greeting on the Feast of the Assumption and a last word from Spain before taking the train tonight "Francewards".

Summer School is over now and those of us who didn't leave yesterday are just wandering around putting in time. I preferred not to spend the morning of the 15th in the train



somewhere between Madrid and the frontier, being thus prevented from saying Mass. Since the feast is one of obligation here a certain number of the students stayed over last night in order to be able to assist at Mass, including myself. A French priest from Brittany said his at 9:00 a.m., I mine at 10:00, and chaplain of the College his at 11:00. Tonight we shall board the train at 22:45 (a quarter to eleven) and should be at the boarder around noon tomorrow. We have a wait of an hour or so, just enough to have lunch and then on to Lourdes. I hope to be there for both Saturday and Sunday; and propose to go on to St. Alban Monday where I'll be staying until August 25. The address there is Villa Saint Patrice, St. Alban-sous-Sampzon, Ardèche, France, just in case you have a chance to write between now and then. After the 25th I'll be back at the College at Annonay.

Yesterday the closing exercises took place. We all assembled in the great hall, and received our diplomas, two of them as a matter of fact, one for having attended all the lectures, and the other for having successfully passed the oral examination the previous day. These diplomas, of course, don't mean a great deal, but they made everyone happy nonetheless, which was a fine way to bring the summer school session to a close. I think everyone feels a little regret in leaving the University, the professors have been so kind and sociable throughout the whole month. We shall for the most part, I think, go away with a good impression of the Spanish. And if a summer course does nothing better, it has been a success in international relations.



August 22, 1957

32

Observations on weather in Madrid.

Father George Beaune told me in a recent letter that there is a package at Annonay from Lindsay for me; it must be the mat which you put in the mail some time ago.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*

St. Alban-sous Sampzon, Ardèche  
Thursday, August 22, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Back in France safe and sound and happy to be back in the Community again after more than a month's absence. I found your letter of August 13th waiting for me on arrival, Mom; thanks so much for writing. I was happy to learn Father Wally Platt finally dropped in on you. He wrote me shortly after his visit; the letter arrived here yesterday. He was thrilled with you all, very favourably impressed, and enjoyed every minute in Lindsay apparently. He spoke in his letter of each of you individually in such a graphic way that I could almost picture you all together. I'm sure you enjoyed having him; he is a lot of fun when he is wound up - and never seems to run down. We look forward to welcoming him back towards the end of September.

Well the sojourn in Spain belongs to the past now, though my memories are still fresh and vivid enough to be almost the reality. The time went by very quickly despite the number of class hours. On the way back I was able to spend three full days in Lourdes, which





broke the trip nicely and permitted a few extra prayers in that wonderful shrine. I naturally prayed for you all, for all your intentions. Monday night of this week I left Lourdes, travelled all night, changed trains twice, and arrived at St. Alban early in the morning, to find no one at the station. They hadn't received my card announcing the exact date and hour of my arrival. But the curé of the village, Grospierres, where the train stops nearest to here, was only too glad to run me down in his little old fashioned car. I was very happy to have a ride in anything, not feeling up to alking the mile and a half from the station to our house after a sleepless night on the train. There are four Basilians here at the moment, and we expect another one to arrive today. Father Beaune came down yesterday from Annonay after a ten day trip in Brittany and Normandy. He unfortunately had very poor weather, rain every other day it seems, but he has found lovely, bright sunshine down here in the southern part of France, almost as bright and warm as we had it for a whole month in Madrid, but not quite.

We shall be staying here at St. Alban until next Monday, August 26, when we go back to Annonay, and begin preparing classes for another year. The retreat is to take place in September at Annonay, I'm not quite sure of the dates yet. And school re-opens around September 30th, a good bit later than in Canada. The small folk in the different families will soon be thinking of book bags, texts and pen and ink books again. Two months does not be long in slipping by after all.

Closing remarks on Kink's trip and France's financial crisis.



August 31, 1957

34

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Saturday, August 31, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks apologize for late letter and acknowledge one. Sends birthday greetings to Joe and Kink. Sends thanks for the mat.

This morning an additional piece of furniture came into my room transported on the strong backs of three of our workmen, here at the College; it is a bookcase, about 7' high, 5' wide and 2' deep with panelled doors and a big drawer at the bottom. Last year, and for as many years as it is old, it was in the classroom at Maison Saint-Joseph, the house where we lived for the first two years at Annonay. It served as a small library for the minor seminarians. But since there are no longer any minor seminarians up there, it was really serving no purpose, and since I have the spiritual direction of all the students at the college who more or less envisage the priesthood as their vocation, it will do more good here than there. I intend to arrange all the spiritual books I can lay my hands safely on in it; lives of saints, etc. which interest teenagers and make good reading for them. It should prove to provide an intimate personal contact with them when they come for a book, a contact which I would not otherwise have. Unfortunately a good number of the volumes that I have on hand to put in it are so old they are really outdated; but little by little we hope to make something up-to-date and valuable of it.

Different parts of the school have been getting a going over since the holidays began, the



August 31, 1957

35

biggest project being a new study-hall for some 100 seniors. Partitions had to be knocked down (one of which was a 26" stone wall) steel beams and supporting pillars had to be installed, and a completely new floor in square tiles. It has been a big job and an expensive one. The funds of the college are none too copious, so we have to calculate with precision just how far we can spend each year. The building being rather old requires a never-ending series of alterations.

Closing remarks speak of the re-opening of schools in Lindsay.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
September 4, 1957.

Dear Kink,

Expresses thanks for birthday gift sent via Mary Kennedy. Telephone conversation with her.

Shall be writing in a day or two to Mother and will tell her of our drive to La Salette. It is a shrine in honour of Our Lady away up in the French Alps, in beautiful country, but rather difficult to arrive at. We had a good car though so the difficulties were reduced to a minimum.

These days are very restful for me. The students are not back yet and about I have to do is leisurely to prepare my classes for the opening of school. Have also been spending a bit of time on the library in my room here;



September 9, 1957

36

and giving an odd afternoon to a go of tennis with Father Beaune, or whoever is available. Our weather is lovely at the moment, but the ground is extremely dry and hard. There has been no rain for weeks, which should mean a good wine harvest. The quality increases in proportion to the hours of sun the grapes get, so say those who know the vineyard.

Best to you all, and once again my thanks.

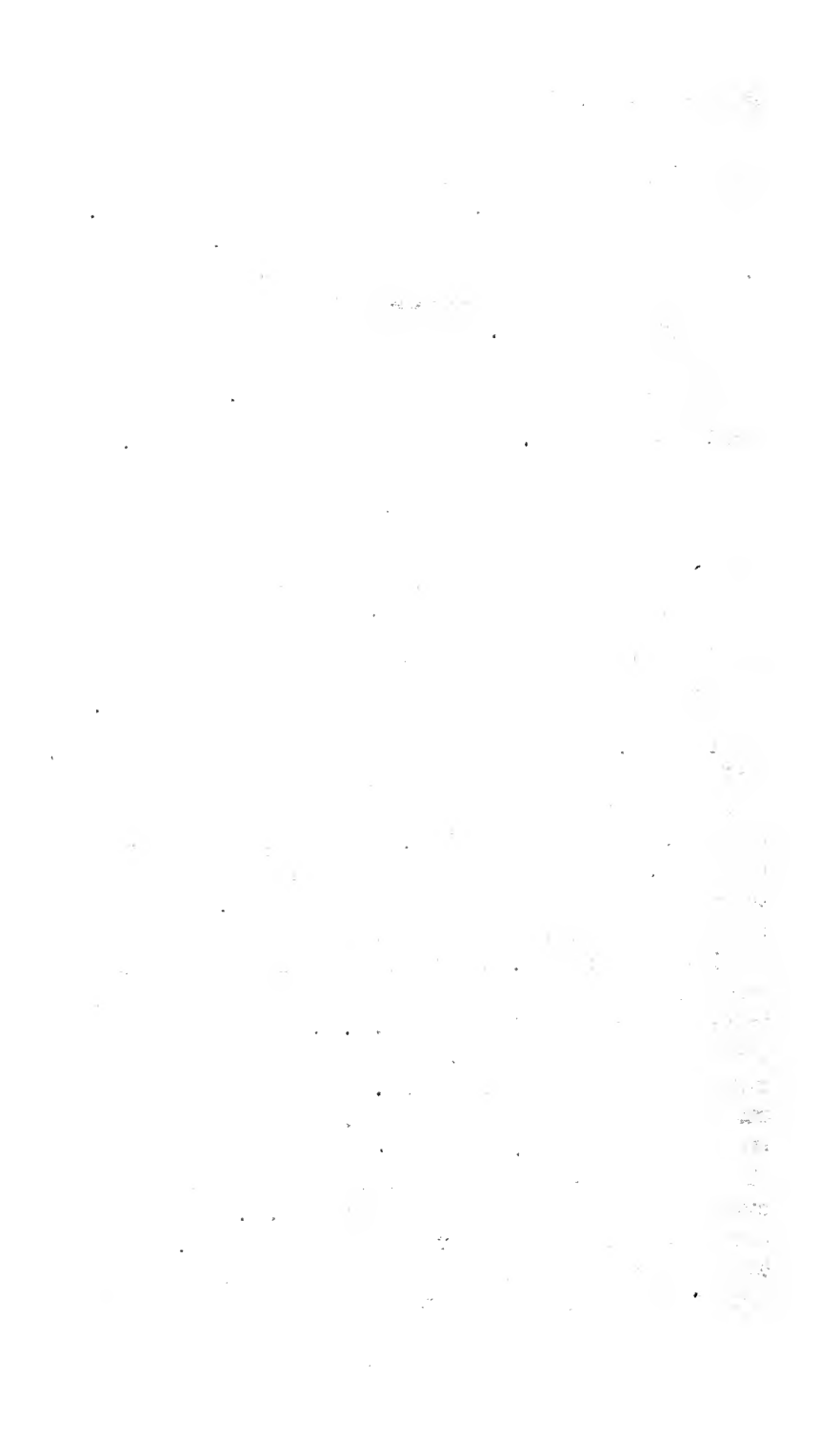
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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Monday, September 9, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks apologize for a late letter.

Yesterday, Sunday, turned out to be a busy day. Being the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, great crowds flocked to the nearby Marian Shrine, Notre Dame d'Ay, for Mass and procession, and a good many took advantage of the opportunity for going to confession. Three of us from the college here drove out to the Shrine at 5:30 a.m. and immediately went to work in the confessionals, not emerging till well after ten o'clock (a.m.). Some of the Jesuit Fathers who reside there had already begun hearing at 4:00 a.m., there being a number people there already, mostly from the surrounding area. We distributed several hundreds of Communion at the different Masses, even at the High Mass at 10:30 a.m., which by the way I had the privilege of singing. So those who say there is no faith left in France are saying only a partial truth, which applies





only to certain areas. The fact that the feast fell on a Sunday made it easier for the farmers and factory workers to attend.

While on the topic of Marian Shrines I should like to tell you of our trip to La Salette last Thursday, a little place lost in the southern pre-Alp mountains, about 150 kilometres from here. The Superior, Father Charles Roume, wanted to treat three of the Sisters here to an outing, the Sisters who take care of the kitchen and prepare all the meals for us and the students the year round, and I, being the only one here at the moment who can drive, was chosen as chauffeur. We left at 7:00 a.m. with a trunkful of lunch in the back, after having said our Masses and breakfasted. Our first stop was Grenoble, where we took out time to mount up to the top of a neighbouring mountain in a cable-car. There was unfortunately a bit of fog and haze that morning but the view of the other nearby mountains was magnificent nonetheless, and the experience of hanging in mid air unique and breathtaking for the Sisters who had never been on such an outing before. From there we followed the Rhône Valley to the south until it came time to veer east and begin the climb towards the shrine at La Salette. The road becomes quite narrow, one way in fact, though there are passing spots at handy intervals, and climbs so steeply that only a new car in good condition can take it in second gear. The climb goes on for about 30 kilometres back and forward across the flank of one hill that towers higher than the last. At places the view down into the valley and plain, over 2000 feet below, is enough to make you wonder if you're not going to run short of air and hope



September 13, 1957

38

you won't lose equilibrium or miss a turn in the road. Though I have never been to the Rockies, it reminded me of the picture I once imagined as Kink described her trip to the ice fields when she was in the West. At last we came up to the Shrine, the last mile of road being in very bad shape, aprked the car, and proceeded to pay tribute to the Blessed Virgin in the church that has been built there since the apparitions to the two young cow-herds back around 1853. Needless to say the Sisters were delighted to have the opportunity of coming there, as were Father Roume and I who were also seeing it for the first time. Better leave off there for want of space; shall complete the pilgrimage next time.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Friday, September 13, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks acknowledge letter of the 8th and Mass stipend. Recalls experiences of F ther Richard Donovan and a French student off the same summer course with him in Spain during the past summer regarding lost wallets.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Sunday, September 29, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks offer congratulations on his parents' 49th wedding anniversary.



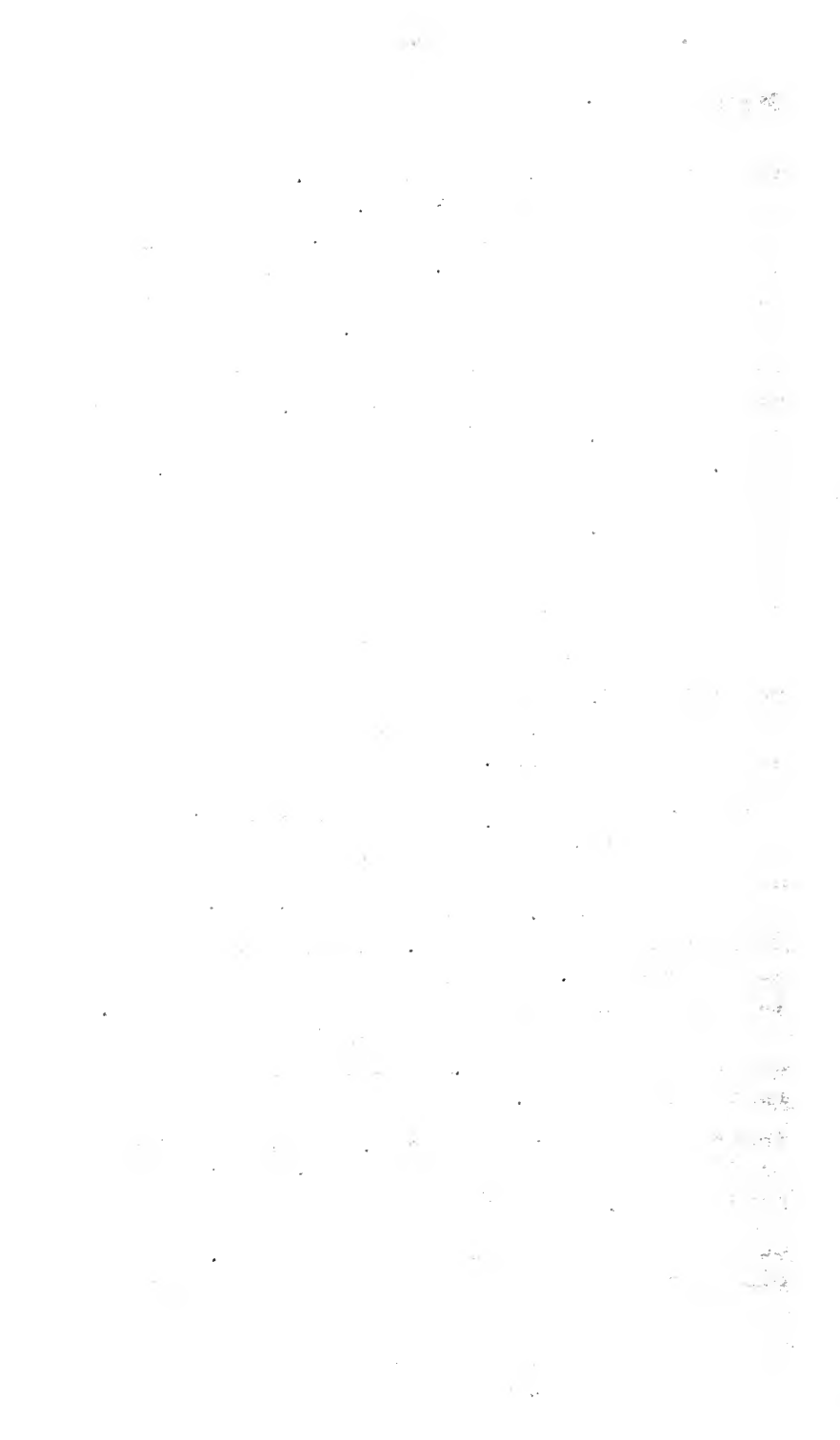
No sign of Father Carroll as yet, but I hope he finds time to look us up. Annonay is not the easiest place to arrive at, especially if one doesn't have a car. If he would phone us from some main city in France, we could give him the necessary directions.

Father Robert Scollard wrote me yesterday and mentioned that your former pupil, Mom, Father Simon Perdue, is coming over to Europe this Fall. But he is apparently chaplain to some group or other, and will not be able to pass near Annonay.

Father Wally Platt arrived back last night, accompanied by two other Basilians, Fathers John McGee and David Belyea, who are on their way to study theology in Innsbruck and Rome respectively. He looks very well after his summer in Canada, much better than when he left France in July. The change did him good after three years of intensive study at the University of Lyons. He speaks very highly of his brief visit with you, and regrets only not having been able to go back as he had more or less promised. Apparently it wasn't possible to work the trip in, and that I can readily understand, recalling from last summer (1956) how the last few weeks really flew by. He thinks Lindsay is the loveliest town he has seen in some time, particularly the residential areas.

Acknowledges a Mass stipend. Will pray for good weather for the Rosary Hour in Lindsay next Sunday.

Our boys are due to come back tomorrow. The old place has been pretty quiet ever since



October 9, 1957

40

June 30th, but it will get a shaking up starting tomorrow night, so much so, I don't think the good Lord will mind too much if we spend a few hours today bolting things down in preparation for the invasion. I shall have three classes of English again this year and one class of Spanish. The numbers are about the same, perhaps a few more; but my biggest class will be 27, which isn't too bad compared to the 40 or more teachers in Cada and the United States have to handle. Shall be letting you know from time to time how it goes.

Closing remarks.

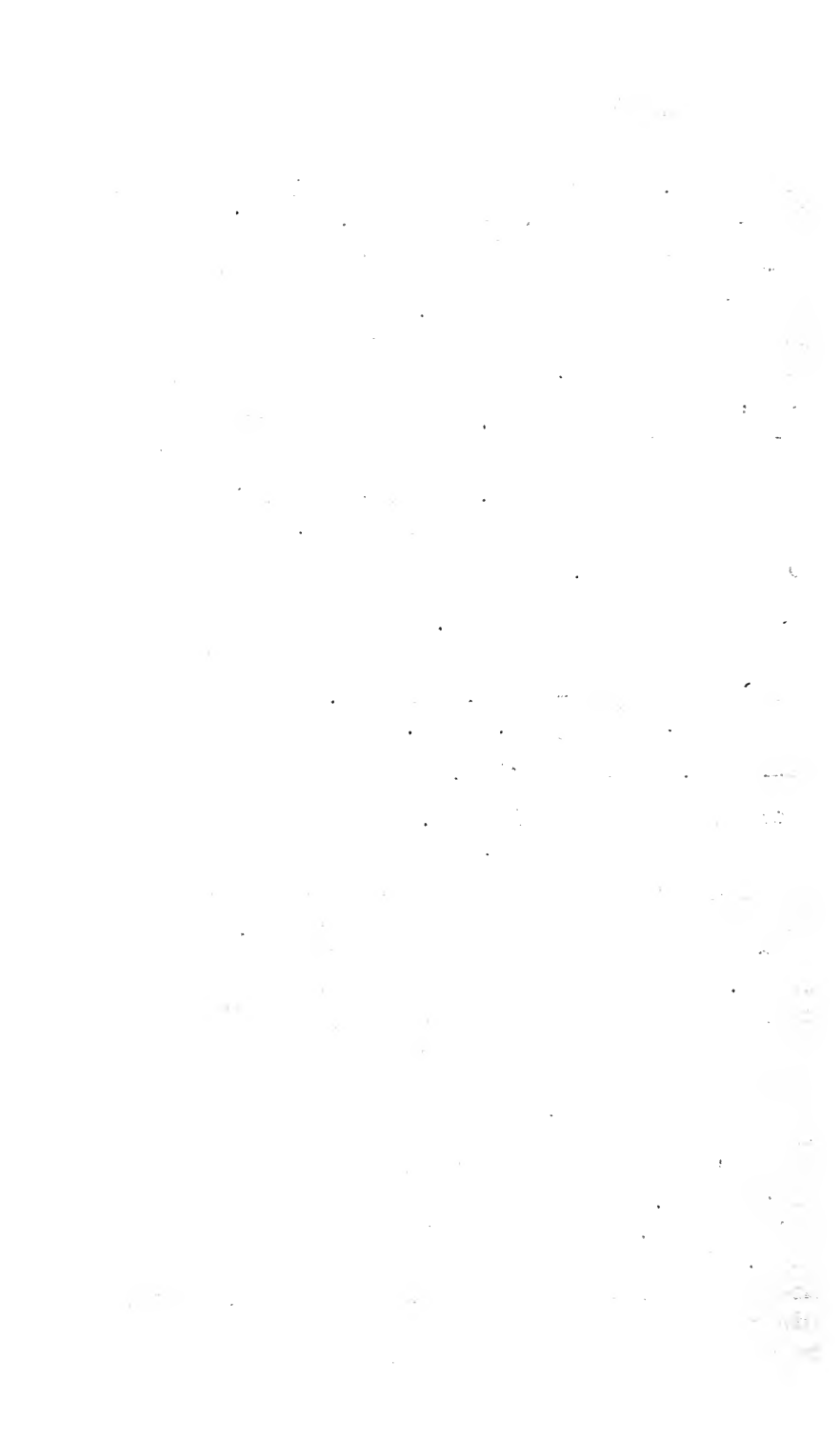
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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Wednesday, October 9, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologies for late letter. Acknowledges letter of October 4th.

And that brings me to a bit of news which just arrived from Toronto this Monday, and which Father Charles Roume has just passed on to me. After lunch he brought me up to his office in a solemn sort of way (I didn't know he was putting it on at the time) to such an extent that I thought myself in for a reprimand of some kind. Flashing back mentally in an instant over my recent conduct, I really couldn't pick out anything particularly reproachable, but suspected there must be something wrong. But he didn't leave me wondering long. He told me very quietly that Father George Flahiff has just written him authorizing him to give me permission to come home next summer to join you in celebrating your golden





October 9, 1957

41

wedding anniversary. At which point he threw off the formal air and broke out smiling; and at which point I practically broke through his ceiling with a bound of joy. It came as a complete surprise to me, albeit a most pleasant one, as you can imagine. I had intended asking for the permission, but later on, perhaps in November or thereabouts, but certainly did not expect it to come through without my even asking. I really think Father Wally Platt is responsible, he being on the local council here and having seen Father Flahiff this summer, but he neither confirms nor denies it, only says he knew "something" about it.

A problem arises, however, with the permission, that is, I'm not sure if I shall be able to stay until the actual date of the anniversary, since school opens here September 30th and I would have to figure on a week or more to travel back to France. Would a sort of unofficial pre-celebration be possible, something earlier in September or August? It may not be necessary, as they may also allow me to stay over until September 29th, but that I will not know for a while. Let me know what you think; and above all, make plans to suit you. I shall always be able to adjust mine to yours. Best to all for now.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Wednesday, October 16, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter of October 10th with Mass stipend.



Speaking of Lindsay makes me think of Bill Murphy and Kay, who are in France at the moment. They wrote me from England last week saying they would be in Paris in a few days, whence they were to go to Lourdes, and wondered if they could call by on the way. To come here actually would be a considerable detour for them since Annonay is not by any means on the main line, Paris-Lourdes. They could come south in our direction and stop off at Lyons which would be within driving distance either by car or bus, but I sort of discouraged them from taking the chance. They might miss their stop, or miss a bus connection and find themselves stranded somewhere. They may be able to look us up though, despite our out-of-the-way, off the beaten track position. I'm still sort of waiting to receive a call from them. As yet no sign of Father Carroll. He has probably despaired of seeking me out in "these here hills". On the other hand, we are having a visit from some people from Toronto at the moment, Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Connolly (he being an old boy of St. Mikes) and a friend of theirs from Brooklyn. They have been attending a Catholic Action Congress in Rome and have called on us fulfilling thereby a promise made to Father George Flahiff before leaving Canada. They are going north from here to Holland, England and Ireland.

Closing remarks on the French government's lack of stability.

\* \* \*



October 23, 1957

43

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Wednesday, October 23, 1957

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

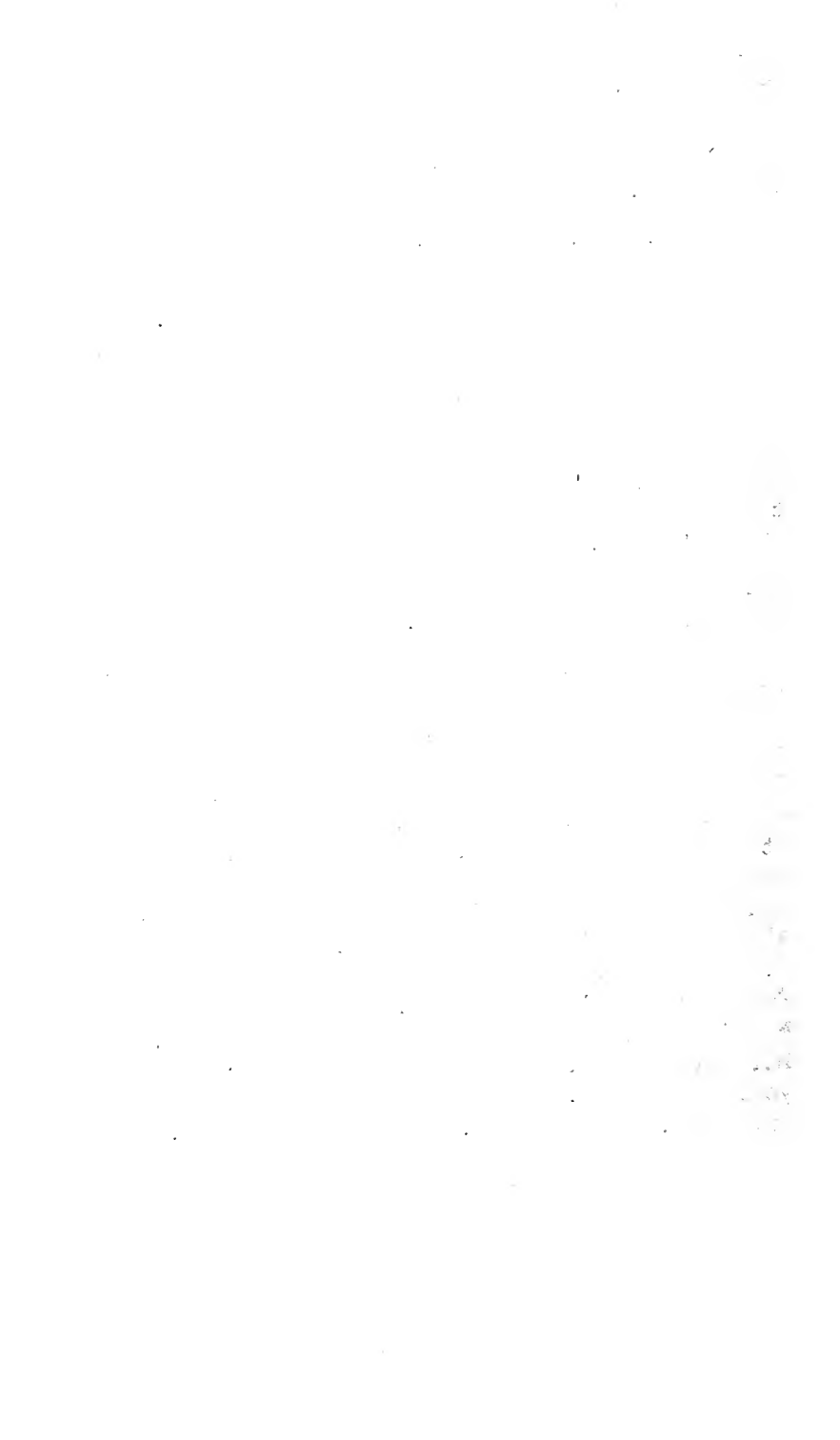
Opening remarks announce the first snow of the year on the hill tops around Annonay. Comments an Asiatic flu in Canada and France.

Had a card from Bil and Kay Murphy from Paris, saying they were about to leave for Lourdes and promising to phone either from there or from Nice. I'm expecting the call any of these days; hope it will not come through when I'm out.

Paragraph on television permitting people to see things at first hand.

Re next summer, I hope my suggestion of anticipating your anniversary date has not caused you undue consternation. Personally I think if you plan to have a reception of a more or less public nature in the parish hall, such as Mr. and Mrs. Shine had, you should announce it for September 29th, the real date. And should I have to leave sometime earlier we could have a more private and intimate celebration earlier in the month, say September 8, the Nativity of Our Lady, or the 12th, feast of Mary's Holy Name, which day could be fittingly begun by a Mass all together. But once again, let me urge you to draw up your own plans. You know best what will work out best, Deo volente. Better close now.

\* \* \*



October 30, 1957

44

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Wednesday, October 30, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

By the time this arrives you will have had the annual call of the masked marauders of Halloween, which reminds us another All Saints is at hand, and necessarily another All Souls. Over here we have a sizeable holiday. The boys go home tonight and don't have to be back until Monday morning at 8:00 a.m., a good long week-end for both them and us. Several of them are at home already, having timely come down with the Asiatic flu last Sunday. So we haven't been able to cover much new work in class this week; too many were missing. Most of the priests of the College will be going out on parish work for the feasts of November 1st and 2nd. Confessions are usually pretty heavy and assistance at Mass much above that of an ordinary Sunday. I shall be going to a small village, seven kilometres from Annonay, Saint-Marcel, for Mass at 7:30 and 10:30 and on Sunday to another little place, Thorrence, which is practically a mission post. There is no resident curé there, so one has to bring all the necessary equipment for Mass. So far I haven't been signed up for confessions anywhere.

Since writing I received two lovely letters from Anne and Lou to whom I return sincere thanks. Hope to be able to answer both during the forthcoming holiday. Today's mail brought a letter from Bill and Kay Murphy from Rome. It seems they tried twice to put a call through to Annonay from Lourdes, but the operators were unable to contact us. I feel badly to have missed them as we would have had a good





November 7, 1957

45

three minutes full of chat for each other. They are leaving for home from Naples, I believe, after what sounds like a wonderful trip. They seem to have enjoyed every minute of it.

Closing remarks ask for cartoons from the Saturday Evening Post and comment on the French political situation.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Thursday, November 7, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening paragraph tells of visits to a dentist.

The flu continues in these parts. Two of the professors have been down with it lately and a number of the students also. So far I have not only escaped but have been feeling in A-1 shape, thanks more than likely to the NCF pills you sent me.

Received a letter from Bill and Kay who stayed longer in Rome than they had planned.

Have you heard of the musical show that has been playing in New York for the past year or so now, "My Fair Lady"? It has been a wonderful success and seems to be a very wholesome programme judging from the songs in it. Father Wally Platt bought the record of the lyrics when he was in New York just before returning to France and brought it with him. We have had a great time listening to it; the music is very light and captivating and the words highly entertaining. I think you would enjoy it.

Closing remarks on weather in Annonay.

\* \* \*



November 11, 1957

46

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Monday, November 11, 1957.

Dear Kink,

First of all many thanks for the clippings. They arrived just a couple of days ago, Saturday, I believe it was, by registered mail. The selection is a good one and I think should be of benefit to the pupils. I thoroughly enjoyed going through them immediately after reading your accompanying note.

Thanks also for the Mass stipend enclose in the letter. I should be able to acquit it this week. The accident was a sad one indeed and I'm sure has left a sorrowful home. You might tell Mom her letter also arrived the same day as yours and the two intentions for Masses also. I'll be mentioning it to her in another day or two.

We are celebrating Remembrance Day by not having school, but all the teachers seem to be busy correcting papers and preparing classes for the rest of the week. Perhaps the weather has something to do with it - heavy, dull sky threatening rain at any moment. We are sort of obliged to stay indoors whether we like it or not.

News came from Toronto recently that we are to open a new school in Ottawa next year. It seems the diocese is willing to put up the building if the Basilians will staff it. But the highlight is that it will be co-educational - the first school of its kind in our history apart from our Colleges. Apparently the Holy Cross Sisters are to take care of the girls. It remains to see how it will work out.

Closing remarks.



November 16, 1957

47

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Saturday, November 16, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter with Mass stipend enclosed.  
Laments death of Olive and is consoled by her  
beautiful preparation for death.

Strange illness of a thirteen year old student  
whose larynx began to swell and almost choked  
him.

Closing remarks deal with family news.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Sunday, November 24, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

The house is very quiet at the moment, all the  
boarders being out on a hike, and most of the  
teachers one place or another as well. The  
only sound is coming from Father George Beaune's  
room directly under mine where he is using a  
typewriter, more than likely typing a letter  
to his folks in Windsor.

Seven or eight students are serving an after-  
noon jug, 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. Detention on  
Sunday is rather rare and in their case was  
for low marks.

This morning I said Mass again at the little  
church about eight miles from here, La Roche-  
périandre. The chaplain who normally goes  
there every week has been convalescing lately  
after an attack of pleurisy.

You may not have known it or even suspected  
it, but after the All Saints holiday I suddenly



November 24, 1957

48

became a mathematics teacher as well as English and Spanish. Our former mathematics professor had to leave for health's sake, and no one was found to replace him, so his hours of class were divided up among three of us, the Grade XII being my portion. It meant a bit of scurrying about in several arithmetic, algebra and geometry textbooks to refresh the problems in my mind and to learn the necessary vocabulary. But it was not impossible and managed to work out somehow or other during the past three weeks. Actually I learned more than the kids, but I guess that only stands to reason. However, it is over now, as we managed to locate a real mathematics teacher who will take over tomorrow morning, leaving me very happy indeed. It was a good experience and worth the effort, but one I would not care to repeat too often.

Closing remarks include thanks for a bottle of pills.

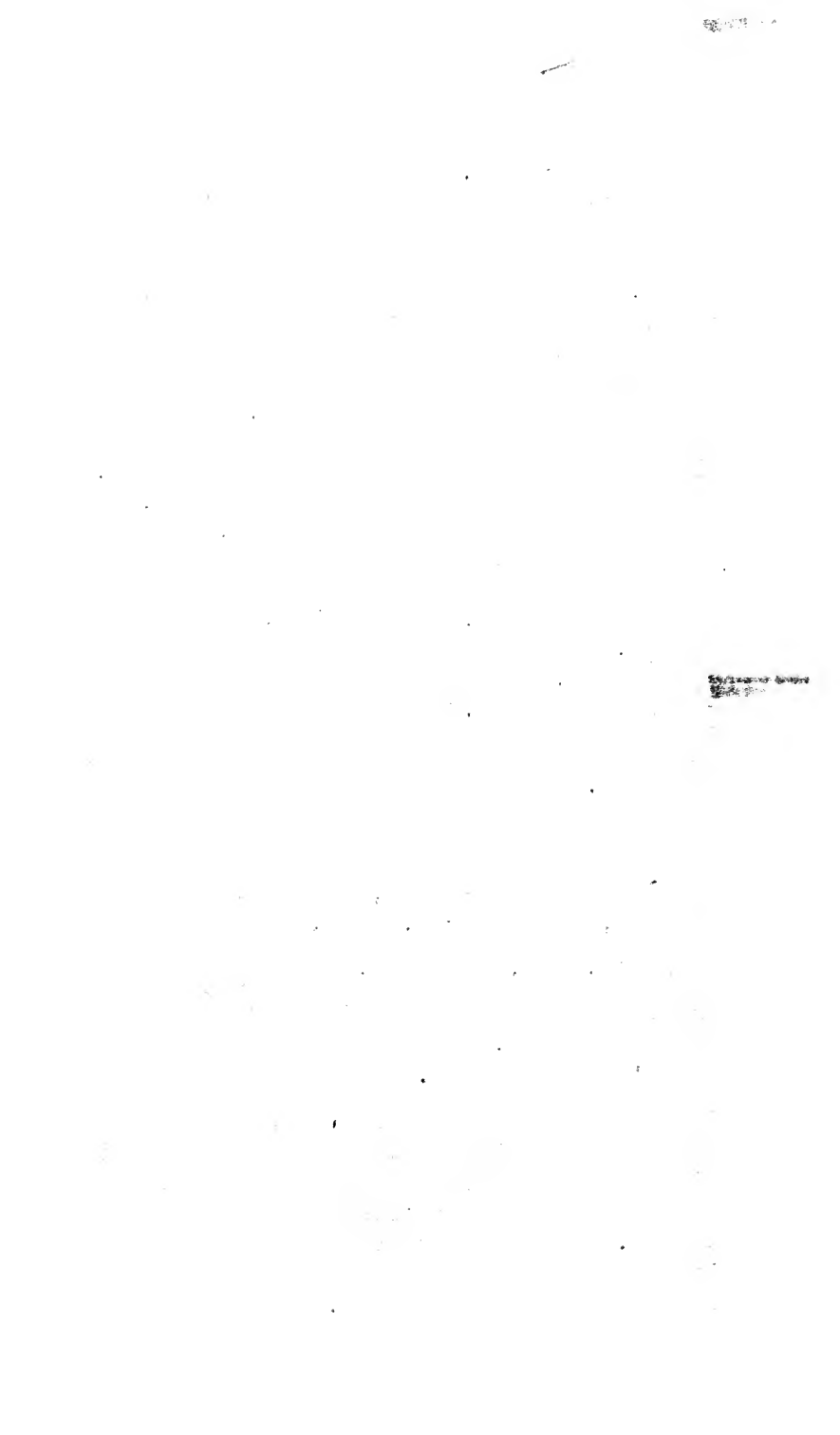
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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Tuesday, November 26, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges Mass intentions and comments on family news. Inquires about the Catholic Women's League teac.

It is true we are opening a school in Ottawa next year and it may very well be I should find myself appointed there some day, though nothing has been mentioned of it yet, of course. Appointments come from headquarters in Toronto and one rarely knows ahead of time what they are or to where. Being a school

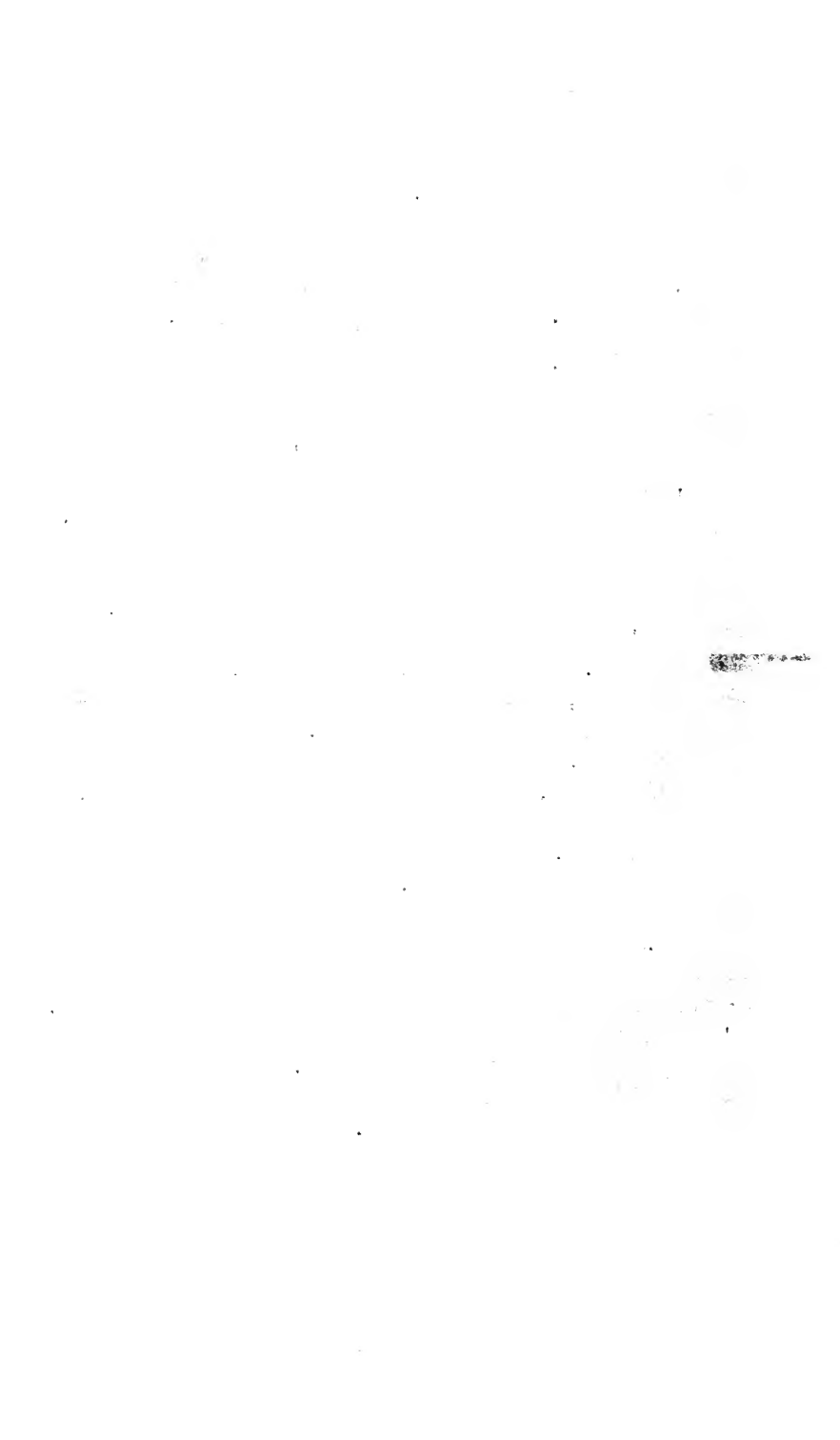




for both boys and girls it is a new undertaking for the Basilians, and I have a feeling a number of other orders and dioceses are watching closely from the sidelines, as it were, to see if it is going to work out successfully. We are praying it will.

"The Tablet", a Catholic English review which we receive here from London (England) announced this week another new venture on the part of the Basilians, though it didn't call us by name, that of an Anglican College in federation with the University of Assumption in Windsor. Father Carlisle LeBel is the President of Assumption University and has admitted Canterbury College much on the same basis as St. Michael's College is part of the University of Toronto. Anglicans, of course, will run the College, but will benefit by all Assumption University has to offer. On the question of doctrine, Father LeBel is quoted as having shrewdly said, "We have agreed to disagree", but for everything else they are apparently in agreement. We are praying for the success of that experiment too, as it could work rather badly if the Anglicans become too strong. Such a step would be impossible and unheard of in England where Catholics and Anglicans are still very often at loggerheads. I'm wondering what Rome thinks of it; she surely knows about it already. Father Terence McLaughlin will undoubtedly be questioned when he comes over next Spring.

\* \* \*



December 6, 1957

50

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Friday, December 6, 1957.

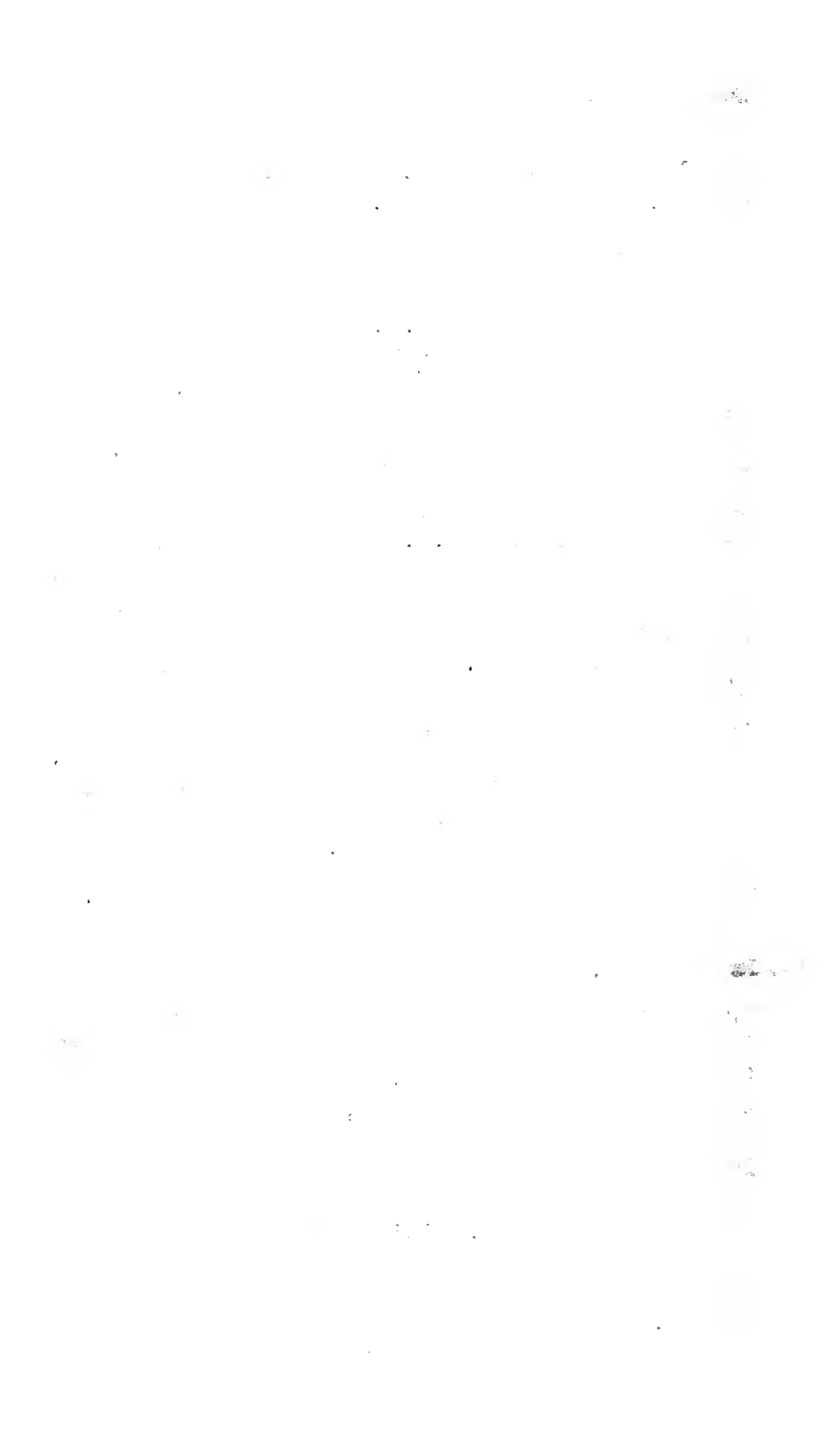
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Just back from First Friday devotions which we hold here at 4:45 p.m. in the afternoon, that being a more convenient hour for the students than later on in the evening. This morning they all assisted at Mass at 11:00 and a good number received Holy Communion. It is very handy now, especially for school children; they can have their breakfast at the regular time, 8:00 a.m. or shortly afterwards and still receive Holy Communion around 11:30. The present Holy Father has certainly done a lot to realize the dreams of Pope Pius X on Frequent Communion. Monday we are to have a Solemn High Mass in honour of the Immaculate Conception, followed by adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 4:00 in the afternoon. It is a custom over here to combine the two, on various occasions, devotion to Mary and to her Son in the Eucharist.

Christmas term examinations begin next week.

Hopes the situation down Belleville way has brightened.

France is eagerly awaiting news of the American satellite which apparently is still in the experimental stages. They are very quick to criticize the Americans, but deep down I think they are sorry to see the Russians out in front for the moment and will rejoice if the United States can soon match them, if not go them one better. It's a ridiculous sort of contest in a way, and has a very tragic side for there is no telling where it might end up. The European countries as a whole



December 16, 1957

51

are not too keen on having intercontinental missiles as guides of world policies. Better close now with very best to all.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
December 16, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter of December 9th.

Observations on the extra work load being carried by his father with Uncle Joe sick.

Christmas examinations are in full swing.

All of us shall be going out to the parishes here to help with confessions, preaching and Masses. I shall be returning to Le Cheylard where I went for Easter last.

Closes with request for Christmas prayers.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
December 22, 1957.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Students have left for Christmas holidays and priests will soon be out on Christmas work.

Acknowledges letter of December 15th with news of Aunt Mary's death, and High Mass stipend.

Closing remarks deal with family affairs.

\* \* \*



December 27, 1957

52

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
December 27, 1957

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letters and Mass stipends.

Monday last I went down to Le Cheylard, arriving there just at noon. At 2:00 p.m. we went to work in the confessionals, the curé, two other priests and myself, and emerged at 7:00 for supper. The next day being Christmas Eve, and also market day in the town we were kept busy for about nine hours, morning, afternoon and evening. But a number of people were not able to get out by reason of the intense rain. It simply spilled down by the bucket all day and all night long, and all Christmas Day too for that matter. I said two Low Masses at midnight and the third one later on Christmas Day at 6:00 p.m. in the evening. The people turned out pretty well despite the inclement weather. The curé drove me back to Annonay yesterday afternoon, which was very kind of him. I much prefer his car to the two or three hours on the bus. There isn't much on the agenda now, except to prepare for the re-opening next Friday morning.

Best wishes to all hands for a Happy New Year.

\* \* \*





January 5, 1958

53

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Sunday, January 5, 1958.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter of December 30, 1957,  
with family news.

School has re-opened. Comments on observance  
of the feast of the Epiphany.

Anecdote about lesson in class that told of  
English children hanging up stockings at the  
fireplace on Christmas Eve.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 8 janvier 1958.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Another Thursday afternoon has come to pass,  
which over here is a half holiday to compen-  
sate for school on Saturday, so I have a few  
minutes free to say hello.

Before going any further I should like to ac-  
quaint you with a few dates for this coming  
summer, at least as far as we can tell at the  
moment. We are more or less obliged to make  
a decision here in order to have passage on  
the liners, at least those going westward in  
July. Since school gets out on June 30, and  
is followed by a few days of marks meetings,  
report sessions, etc., I think the handiest  
boat and date for me would be the "Liberté",  
French Line, sailing from Le Havre on July  
17th. In any case we have ordered two tickets  
for that date, which of course, could be can-  
celled later on if need be. Who is the second



January 8, 1958

54

passage for? Not another novice this time, but the director of studies here, Father René Robert, who will be spending the summer visiting the different Basilian houses within range of Toronto. He being a French Basilian will be interested in seeing what life is like on the other side of the ocean. We should arrive at Toronto the evening of July 24th, which means I should reach Lindsay sometime July 25th.

Though it is not official yet, I should be able to stay the rest of July, all of August (except for the retreat) and a few days in September, probably until the 4th or 5th, making about five weeks. As to the return trip, we sort of planned on sailing from Quebec on the "Empress of France", September 9th. In that way Father Robert would see a bit of French Canada (Montreal and Quebec) and some of England too (Liverpool and London) since that boat is the Canadian Pacific Line which goes directly to England. We would be back at Annonay a week or ten days before October 1st to get things in order for the opening of school. What do you think of that plan? Would it be too early for you to have our "unofficial celebration" of the anniversary sometime in August, say the feast of the Assumption, 15th, or for the feast of the Immaculate Heart, August 22nd, or some such day when it would be handy for all concerned. That is only a suggestion, which I should like you to talk over among yourselves. Perhaps you see difficulties or even impossibilities which I don't realize. Let me know what you think in any case. Cheerio for now.

\* \* \*



January 18, 1958

55

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
January 18, 1958.

Dear Bernie,

A letter of family news which urges Vernie to keepyup the recovery until completely well again.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Wddnesday, February 12, 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Birthday greetings to his mother.

We opened the Marian Year yesterday on the centenary of Our Lady's Apparitions at Lourdes with a special Mass and sermon for the whole student body at eleven a.m., plus a holiday in the afternoon. The boys were particularly grateful and delighted over the free afternoon. They played football steadily from one to six, then had an hour's study, or 45 minutes rather, dollowed by Benediction and Rosary, supper and a film in the evening. They take a real interest and pride in the story of Bernadette, not without a certain taint of nationalism, but not exaggerated though. I think a number of the boys plan on paying a visit to Lourdes this summer with their families. We tried to organize a pilgrimage by bus from the college, but it did not succeed. We needed at least 40 pilgrims to make it worthwhile, but only twenty signed up. Perhaps the cost of the trip made a number of them shy away, but I think it was rather that they prefer to go with their folks in the family car rather than a bus. The distances from



February 12, 1958

56

here is about that of Toronto to Montreal, roughly 375 miles. From radio and newspaper reports the crowd on hand yesterday for the official opening was considerable enough, about 60,000 one paper said. The Blessed Virgin will surely be pleased with all these prayers being offered to her, not only by the pilgrims, but by all those, actually more numerous, who cannot come to Lourdes, and yet who are praying more in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes this year.

Acknowledges letter.

Weather in Annonay quite mild.

News from Tunisia is disturbing.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 27 février 1958.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Explains use of house stationery. Apologizes for delay in writing, due partly to two days in bed with a cold. Acknowledges with thanks the gift of a scarf knitted by his mother and Kink. Observations on weather in Canada.

Next Friday, feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, and First Friday, we are having a day of prayer for priests and missionaries the world over and for vocations. An exposition is supposed to be ready for that date too, which constitutes one of our chief preoccupations at the moment. We have a huge map of Europe and the New World almost completed, showing all our houses, with photographs for





March 16, 1958

57

as many as we could obtain. Beside that will be one or two or three panels showing Basilian acitivities. That is how I spent the afternoon today, as a matter of fact cutting pictures out of the different year books from our schools in Canada and the United States. Tomorrow after class I'll try to past them onto huge sheets of paper and label them.

August 15th sounds like a good choice of dates since abstinence will not be required and since our Retreat at St. Michael's will more than likely be held some time after the 15th.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 16 mars 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

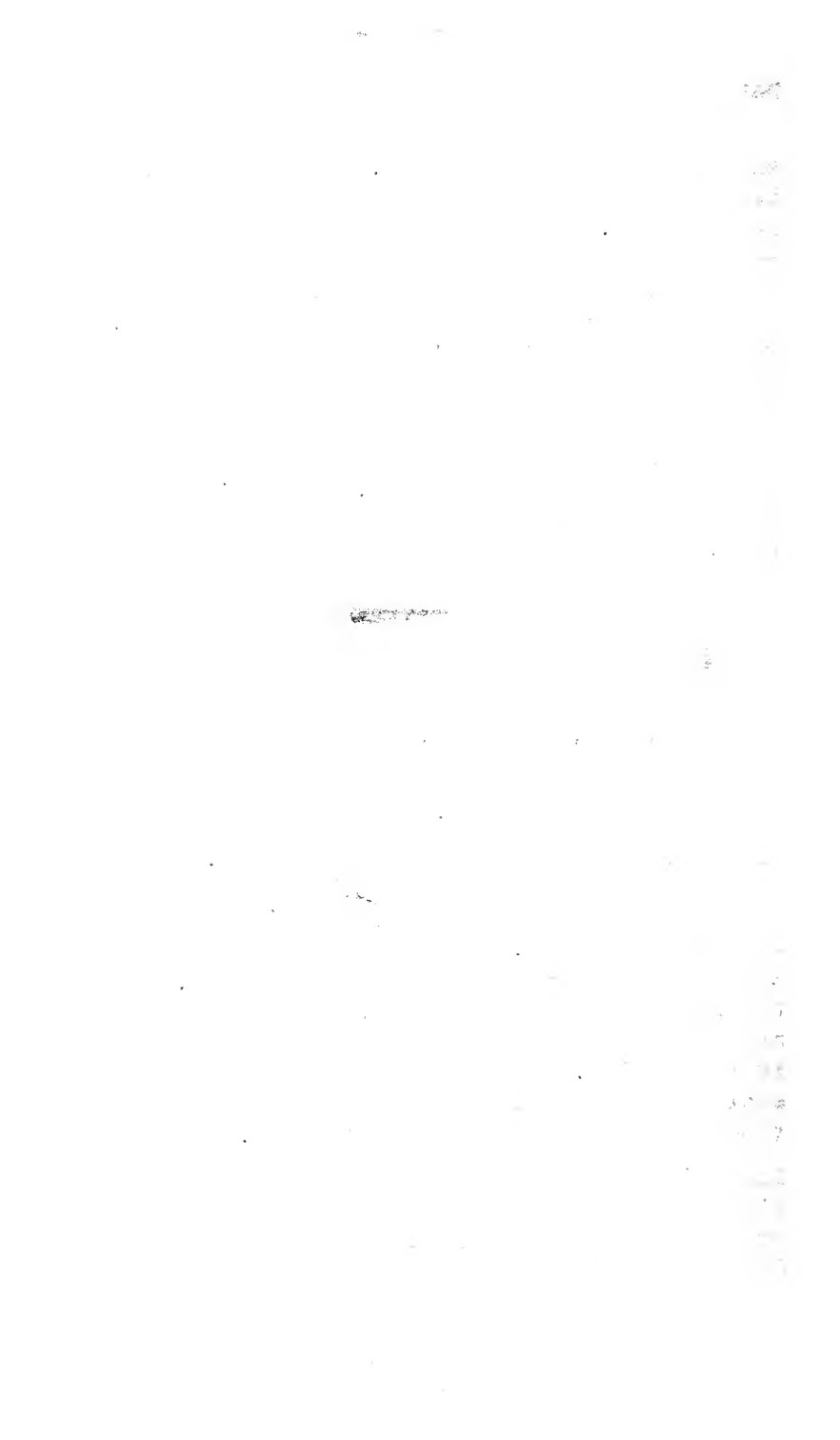
Opening paragraphs speaks of the St. Patrick's Day Concert in Lindsay.

Acknowledges letter with Mass stipend.

Second term will end on April 1st.

Speaking of exams, there is one coming up this Saturday for Fathers George Beaune, Charlie Principe and myself, an annual exam in theology so long as we are still considered young priests. We have to review certain sections of Dogma, Moral and Sacramental theology for it as well as Cnon Law.

And while still on the question of examinations three of us passed our driving test over here Friday morning. We thought our Ontario permit was good in France, but upon



making inquiries, found out that we should have passed the test here and studied the traffic rules for this country long ago. So we went through all the formalities, losing a half day (and about 2,500 francs) but came out successfully, Fathers Wally Platt, George Beaune and I. We can't be hailed up on that score now.

Father Terence McLaughlin has come and gone; he should be in Rome by now. We hope to see Father David Belyea at Easter. He is studying in Rome this year, and also Father John McGee from Innsbruck. Bob Fleury will be coming too, I think, at least he hoped to be able to make it in his last letter. Best to all.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 25 Mars 1958. The Annunciation.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Once again my apologies for this being a day or two late. Sunday was the day I had hoped to get writing to you, but it turned out that I was writing a theology exam most of the morning and for a good part of the afternoon. You probably know that every priest has to write an annual examination in theology for five years after leaving the Seminary, and since my years of graduate studies don't count I'm still among the candidates for that exam, and shall be for another three years. It's profitable, of course, to review the different tracts which we studied in detail some years ago, but it's also a bit of a burden, since it usually comes about each



year at a very busy time, just when we are preparing, giving, and correcting term exams in the school. However, it is over now for another year, at least I hope so, unless the examiners decide to oblige us to a supplementary one.

Examinations are on in the school.

This is a big day at Lourdes, with a special envoy from the Holy Father present to bless the new basilica. I learned a rather curious detail about the ceremony, whether or not it is true remains to be seen. The newspaper this morning reported the Cardinal as arriving from the airport at the basilica in a lovely new red car, where there awaited him an even levelier white car to take him around the inside of the basilica. Since the building is immense, and several rounds have to be made during the blessing of it, it is quite possible that His Eminence did not feel up to the fatigue involved. If it is true, one can hardly criticize the Church for being behind the times in her ceremonies.

This year I shall not be going down to Le Cheylard for Easter work, but to a little parish about fifteen miles from Annonay, Saint Romain d'Ay, and only for Wednesday and Saturday of Holy Week. That's a considerably lighter assignment than in years past and will permit me to visit a bit more with our two confreres from Rome and Innsbruck, whom we expect the last of this week.

Better close now with Easter greetings.

\* \* \*



April 3, 1958

60

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 3 avril 1958

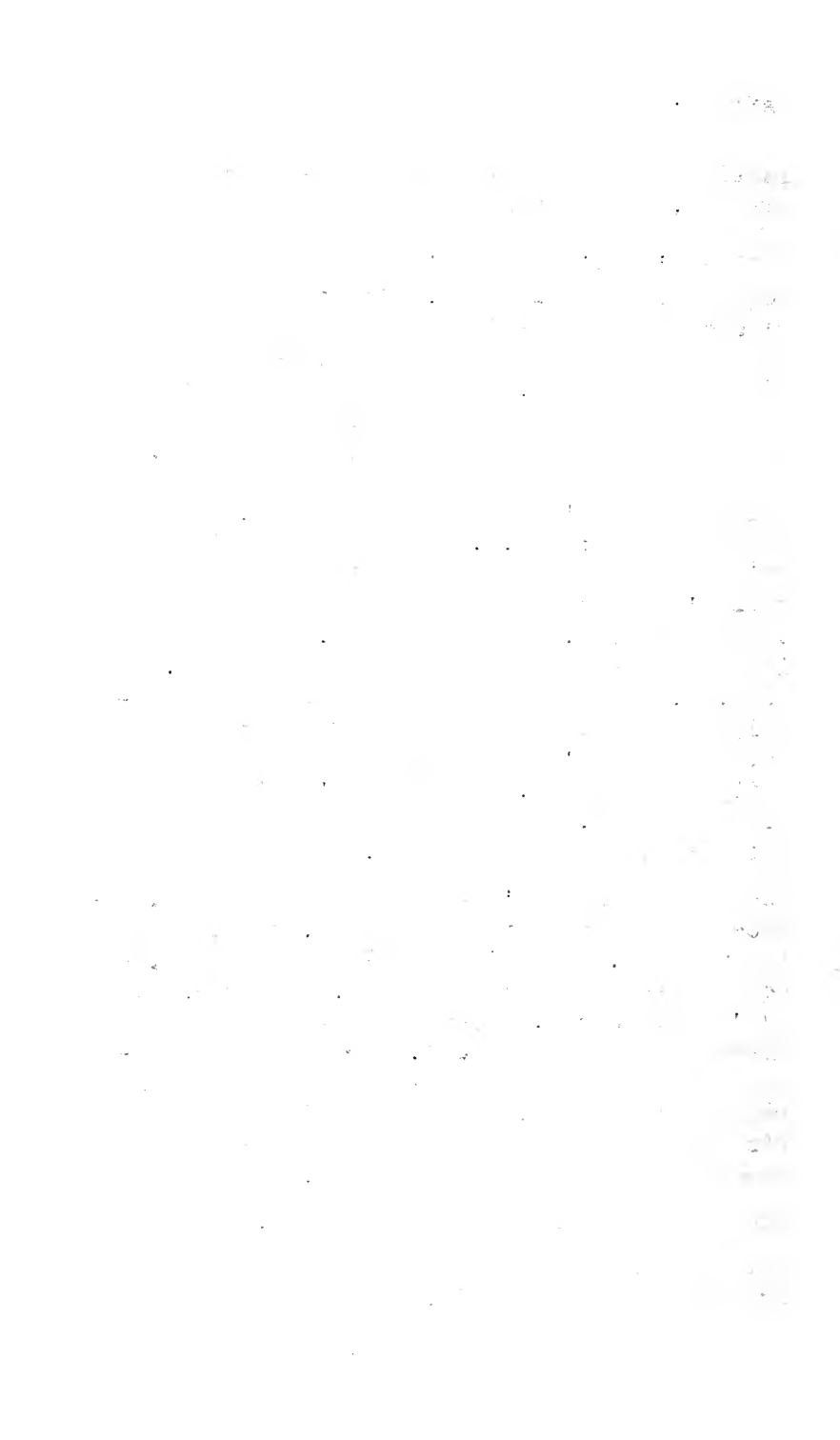
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Holy Thursday afternoon. In years gone by we used to spend this afternoon going around visiting the different repositories of the Blessed Sacrament. But since the Mass takes place in the evening now that custom has been either lost or transferred to Good Friday. In another hour I shall be taking the bus for Saint Romain d'Ay where I shall be celebrating the Mass at 7:00 p.m. At the moment it is raining cats and dogs, so it's rather unlikely that I'll be able to go by my usual means of transportation, the motor-bike. Luckily there is a good bus schedule in that direction. However, for coming back this evening (probably around 9:30 by the time the curé and I have supper) I'll have to depend on his generosity and his car. He shouldn't mind helping me out though, seeing as he is being helped out first, and considerably.

There probably won't be many people in attendance at the Mass and procession, considering the weather, which is a real problem for the country folk in this district, who as a rule don't have a car. Many of them have to come more than a mile on foot. Hope you are having better weather at the moment and for the rest of Holy Week. The ceremonies are so rich in meaning and grace when you can be present and follow them closely.

School closed on Tuesday afternoon.

Father John McGee is with us at the moment from Innsbruck, Austria, where he is studying





April 20, 1958

61

theology; and we expect Father David Belyea from Rome tomorrow. Early next week they are going off to Lourdes before going back to their studies. I also expect Bob Fleury the first part of next week, though I haven't had any recent word from him.

Better see about raincoat and rubbers now before hiking to the bus. Happy Easter to all!

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 20 avril 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

School reopened on Friday (this is Sunday). Is thinking more and more of his visit to Canada in the summer. Acknowledges letter of April 7. The annual outdoor bowling tournament is in progress today. The games started after the 8:30 Mass this morning and will certainly go on until close to 8:00 this evening. Everyone and his great-grandfather seems to have turned out, either to play or to watch. Our own boarders of course, are following everything very closely. It's not every day they have such an attraction on their own playing grounds! For a change it is not raining and we even have a bit of sun today.

Closing remarks deal with politics in France and in Canada.

\* \* \*



May 3, 1958

62

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 3 mai 1958. "Mois de Marie"

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letters and Mass stipends.  
Apologizes for missing a weekly letter.

School is well underway again, but this time for the third and last term. Our weather has warmed up considerably, sending shrubs and trees, etc. on their way once again after a long cold spell, and making the kids feel they are closer to summer holidays than in fact they really are. Thursday of this week we held our Alumni Dinner. It being May 1st, a holiday, a fair number of Old Boys were on hand to chat and dine together after a special Mass for them at 10:30 a.m. This week also brought us the news of the death of our parish priest here, a wonderful man who has headed St. Francis Parish for the past 28 years. He was esteemed and beloved by all in Annonay, proof of which was shown at his funeral yesterday morning. the Bishop conducted the burial ceremonies in the presence of at least 100 priests and several hundred parishioners.

I was pleasantly surprised to see you had secured Dr. Lawrence Lynch from St. Michael's College for the Catholic Women's League banquet as guest speaker. He is a very intelligent and all round scholar, specializing in philosophy, but capable of holding his own with professors in other fields as well, such as engineering, chemistry and physics. As I remember him at St. Mikes he used to serve Mass every morning and never missed receiving Holy Communion. He certainly has a splendid influence on the students.



May 11, 1958

63

Next Thursday we are conducting the entire student body on a pilgrimage to a local shrine in honor of Our Lady, about ten miles from here. Some will go on foot, some on bikes, and the rest by bus: they have their choice. Since we were unable to organize a trip to Lourdes, we figured this would be the next best thing.

Closing remarks concern the instability of French politics.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 11 mai 1958.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Describes Solemn First Communion at St. Joseph de Cance Church, in the factory district of Annonay, where he was celebrant of the Mass.

You will be sorry to hear that Jacques Deglesne one of the French novices that came to Canada in 1956 lost his father this week, Thursday morning to be exact. Last Saturday night he took a rather serious heart attack which almost completely paralyzed him. Knowing that he already had a heart condition, the family lost no time in notifying us here at the college Sunday morning. We at once sent a telegram to Toronto where Jacques was residing (at the Seminary 95 St. Joseph Street). By a stroke of Providence he was able to get a seat on a plane that same day. At this season the planes are usually booked up days ahead. He left by Trans Canada Airlines to Montreal and then by a Dutch Airline to Amsterdam (ten and a half hours!) and from there a



June 1, 1958

64

third plane to Paris. He caught the first train to Lyon where Father Wally Platt was waiting for him with our car to rush him to his father's bedside at Annonay. He arrived here about midnight Monday. Since Mr. Deglesne was asleep he did not go in to see him until the next morning. Although unable to talk, his father was able to recognize him and managed to have him understand, "I was waiting for you, Jacques." The family, two brothers and three sisters, were very grateful to have Jacques back as you can imagine, as was the whole Basilian community here. He will stay with us now, seeing that the school year is almost over and his co-patriot, Michel Deglène, will bring his things over to France by boat sometime in June. Both of them will have to go off to the Army in July, unfortunately for two years training. Better close now.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 1 juin 1958.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Your two letters arrived together Mom just a day after I sent the last one. Thanks so much for writing and for taking the trouble to send me McGuire's address. I was able to get a word off to them last Tuesday, though it would be nip and tuck for it to arrive on time. Today will be a grand day for them and for you all. I thought of you at Mass this morning at St. Romain d'Ay where I had to go for the 10:30, replacing Father René Robert who has





June 1, 1958

65

been going there regularly this past month. Father James will have a well earned holiday now and will no doubt be helping his Dad with the Spring work. Does he know yet where he will be stationed?

We had our Solemn Communion Mass this morning here in the college chapel. As I may have told you before the twelve year old boys each year (girls too in the parishes) after passing an examination in catechism make their Solemn Communion at which time they also renew their baptismal vows and make an act of consecration to the Blessed Virgin. It is a big day for them, invitations being sent out to relatives, special remembrances cards printed as for an ordination. The parents come in their very best, and of course, rejoice merrily together afterwards. The ceremony is preceded by a two day retreat for all the candidates. This year we had 29, a few less than last year.

Closing observations on French politics.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 7 juin 1958.

Dear Folks,

Opening remarks on the approach of the end of the school year. Acknowledges letter of June 2nd with Mass stipend for Mr. Deglesne.

I also hasten to answer you question about a possible change of date for our golden reunion. You are quite right in thinking of the effect a Friday celebration might have on the people in general, both in and out of the



June 7, 1958

66

parish even though you had a perfectly valid dispensation from Father Carroll. Earlier in the week might well be better; and feel free to choose whatever day you wish for it will not interfere with my retreat. According to what Father George Flahiff said in his last letter our retreat would take place in the latter part of August, sometime after the 15th. I could find out the exact dates from Toronto and let you know. But go ahead with your plans. Do you think we could begin the day with a Mass of Thanksgiving, a High Mass even? The gold vestments could be worn for the occasion since they replace any other colour, which would seem appropriate. I only offer that as a suggestion, since you may have wished to reserved a special Mass of thanksgiving for the actual date, September 29th. Perhaps you could tell me in your next letter more or less how you have outlined the celebration so far, particularly re time and place of Mass, sermon, etc.

You would have a wonderful day at Father McGuire's first High Mass, breakfast and reception. Thanks for the clipping showing his picture with Bishop Webster. The latter will be happy to have three new men in his diocese. Let us hope he will have more as time goes on, since so much could be done with more manpower.

It's growing late now, 10:30 p.m., and we have a big procession through the city tomorrow for Corpus Christi, so better sign off, wishing once again all the best to all.

\* \* \*



June 20, 1958

67

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 20 juin 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologizes for missing a weekly letter due to pressures from exams before the close of school on June 30th.

Father René Robert and I are looking closer and closer at that date, July 17th, when we board the "Liberté" for a long voyage west. There may possibly be a change in our return dates, at least the matter is under discussion at the moment which could mean that he would be coming back alone on September 8th or 9th or earlier and I on September 17th. We'll let you know when it is decided definitely.

Plans for the August reunion.

Michel Deglène arrived back this week. He talks a good deal about Canada and seems to have been very pleased with his two years. He will not go off to the Army until sometime in September. Better close now.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 25 juin 1958.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Just a few more days now before the doors fly open and our flock takes flight to the four corners of France. We have class this week right up until Saturday noon, but just among ourselves we're really not accomplishing a great deal. The boys are already easing themselves into the spirit of the holidays which doesn't help class work any.



Two days later, June 27th. Something came up the other day to prevent this letter taking off, and yesterday was a rather full day. We went out on a cultural tour of Vienne (France), an outing for our minor seminarians. I suddenly found myself acting as guide for a tour of the ancient Roman ruins that are to be seen in that city, and of the 12th century cathedral. What information wasn't made up on the spot was taken out of a guide-book that I had fortunately kept from a previous visit. The weather didn't exactly favour us; it sprinkled rain the whole afternoon; but the boys were happy nonetheless. The least little drive beyond their own town is a delight for them.

I was saddened to received the news of Miss Corkery's death. She was such a noble and scholarly woman, and I think, fought for her faith more than once on the predominantly Protestant staff of Lindsay Collegiate Institute. She has surely won her crown.

Your choice of August 13th sounds excellent to me, and I am sure all will work out fine.

Could I suggest three Basilian invitations: 1) Father Simon Perdue, 2) Father George Flahiff, 3) Father Ené Robert, the French confrere whom I shall be accompanying this summer. You could reach them by letter at the following addresses: (1) Rev.S.A. Perdue, CSB, St. Basil's Church, 50 St. Joseph Street, Toronto 5; (2) Very Reverend G.B. Flahiff, CSB, 95 St. Joseph Street, Toronto 5; (3) Rev. René Robert, CSB, St. Basil's Seminary, 95 St. Joseph Street, Toronto 5. If either Father Blanchard or Father Begley is in town, it





July 4, 1958

69

would be well to invite them too; and of course Fathers Carroll and Dubbery. That should be enough clergy unless you think of someone else. Best to all for now.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 4 juillet 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

What a delightful week this has been with no classes to prepare and no pile of written assignments to correct! We have all spent it leisurely finishing off the last secretarial work in connection with the report cards, which are going out in the mail tonight along with this letter. Father René Robert, the director of studies, can breathe a little more freely now and begin some immediate preparations for his trip to Canada, one of them being the purchase of a black suit. Over here we never wear anything but the soutane, so that the French confreres don't have anything else in the way of clerical attire.

Thanks so much for your letter of June 27th, Mom, and for your thoughtful greetings for the 29th. Six years have slipped in with such awesome rapidity that I'll soon be afraid to count back to 1952. To answer your questions, as far as I know at the moment there is no one embarking with me on September 16th. But someone may be found willing to go over at that particular time. I intend to sail on the Empress of Britain (The Canadian Pacific Line) from Quebec to Liverpool. There are three Basilians coming to study in Rome



July 4, 1958

70

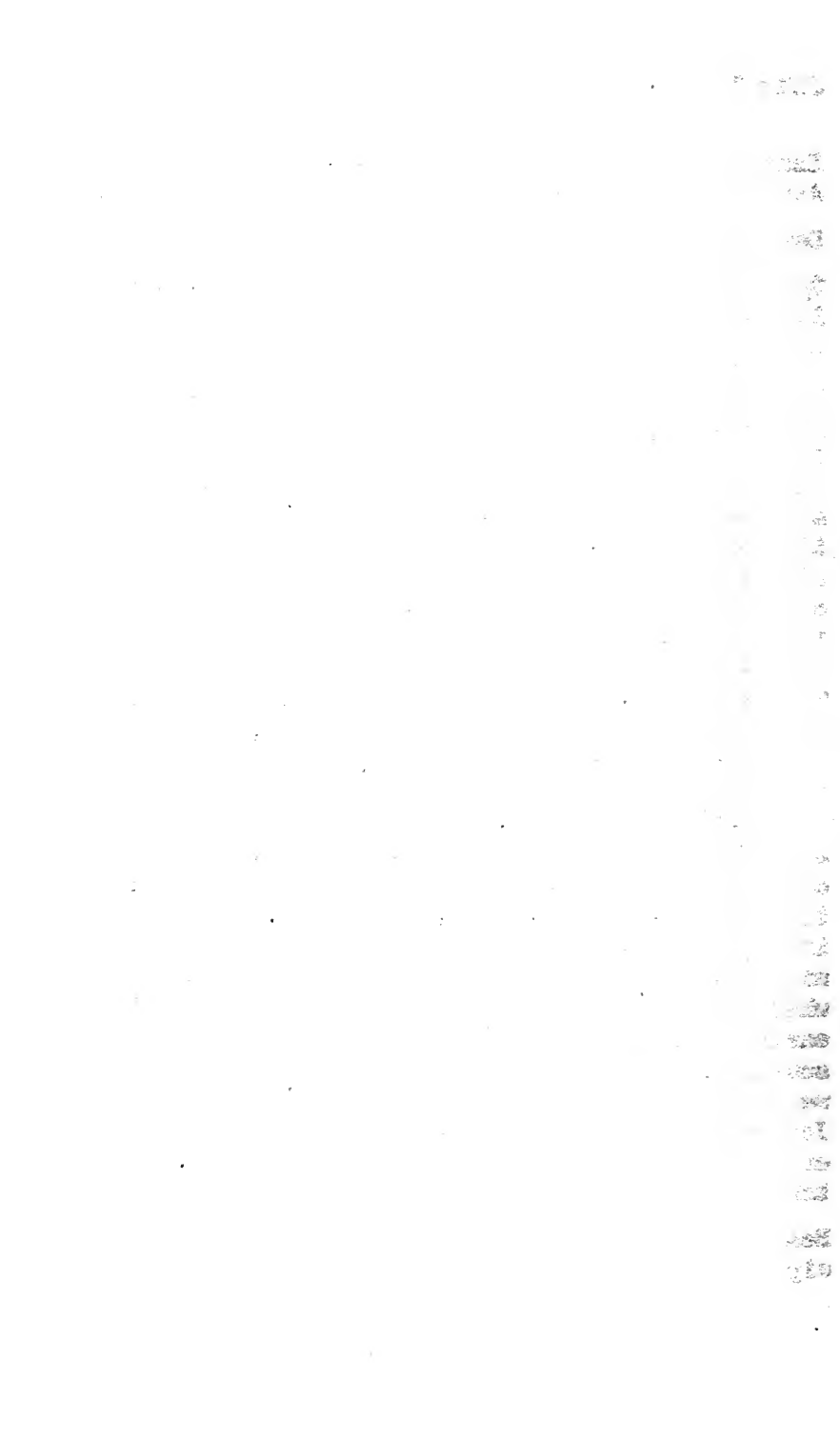
next year and one in Munich, so in that group I may possibly find a travelling companion. Father George Beaune, I believe, is the name of the priest about whom you inquired. He is quite well and seems happy over here, though he found it fairly hard the first year. It was a tremendous change for him, from the parish in Toronto (Holy Rosary). He is taking a little trip to the Brussels Fair this summer.

In the suggestions for invitations to priests in my last letter, I forgot all about Father Bob Fleury. He should be back in Canada early in August and should be free to come up to Lindsay that day. As for Father Robert, he asked me if you would grant him permission to come down to Lindsay a day or two after the 13th. His English being very scanty, he almost needs my constant company, or someone who can interpret for him, and he felt we would be too occupied on the 13th which will probably be true. He wants to present his very best wishes to you, however, as well as meet the family and see our surroundings: church, houses, town, and farms.

It was kind of the two Fathers Forestell to call in. I know both of them quite well, particularly Father Terry - we studied together for a number of years, and travelled many a mile together over here.

Better close for now, with a sincere hello to all in the connection near and far.

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July 13, 1958

71

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 13 juillet 1958

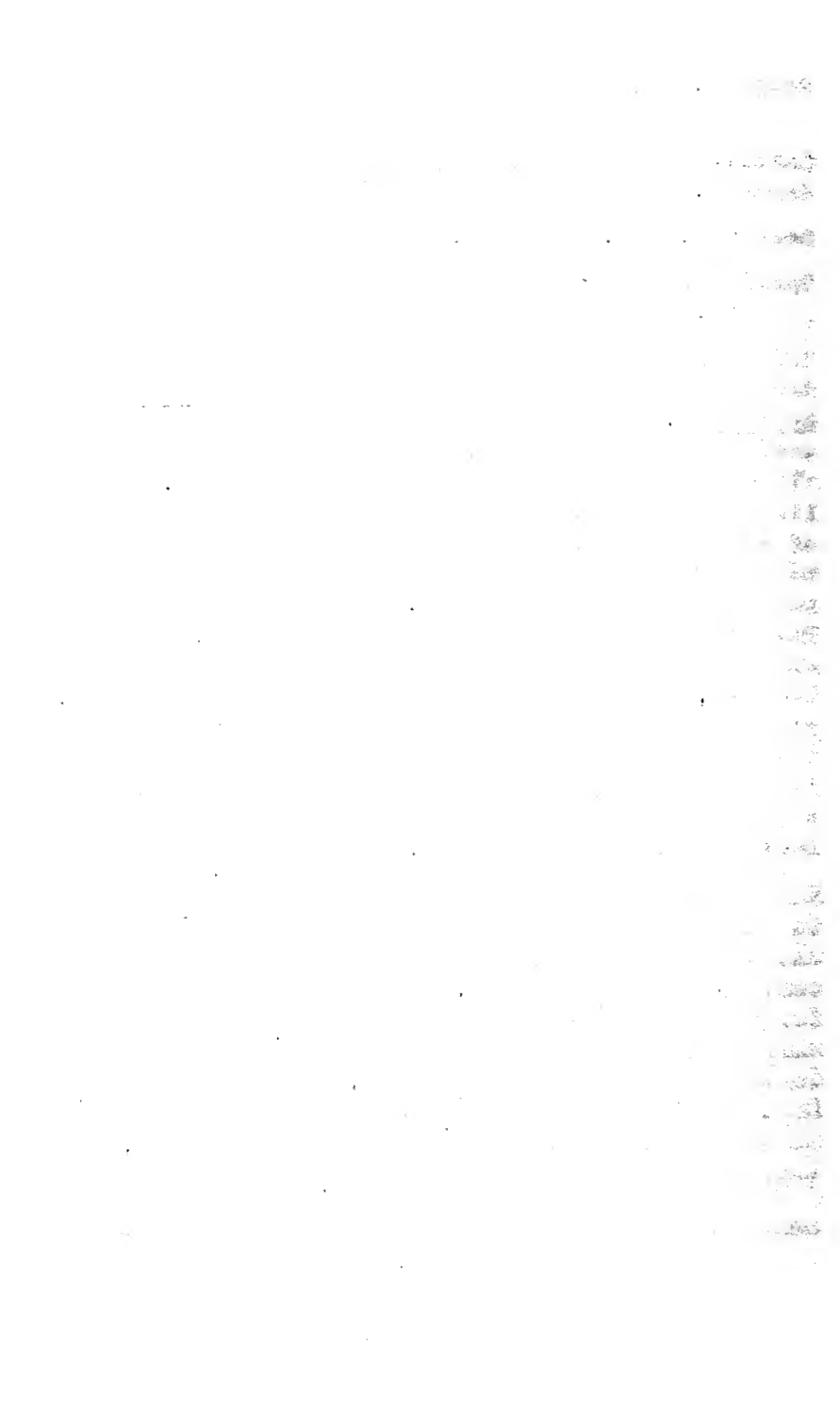
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks refer to the July 12th parade in Lindsay.

This will probably be the last communiqué from this side of the ocean until we meet up facie ad faciem. We take the train to Paris this coming Tuesday morning, and shall board the "Liberté" Thursday around noon at Le Havre. For six days we shall churn the ocean blue (I hope it will be blue!) until we move past the statue of Liberty in the New York Harbour, to put foot once more on American soil. We plan to stay in New York Wednesday and Thursday (July 23, 24) and take the morning train Friday July 25 to Toronto, getting in some time in the late evening. As Father Flahiff has arranged an interview with both Father Robert and me for Saturday to discuss "foreign affairs" in the Community I think it might be just as well if we planned on meeting sometime Sunday, July 27th. Do you think you could drive to Toronto that day? I don't wish to put you under the slightest obligation, but if you would like a bit of a trip that day we might be able to work out a sort of picnic somewhere in one of Toronto's parks around mid-day or early afternoon before driving home. Does that sound possible? You could talk it over and let me know by letter to St. Basil's Seminary, 95 St. Joseph Street, Toronto 5. If you are too busy or too tired, don't hesitate to say so, and I'll take a bus down Sunday afternoon.

Best to all for now, with the delightful anticipation of seeing you soon.

\* \* \*



September 28, 1958

72

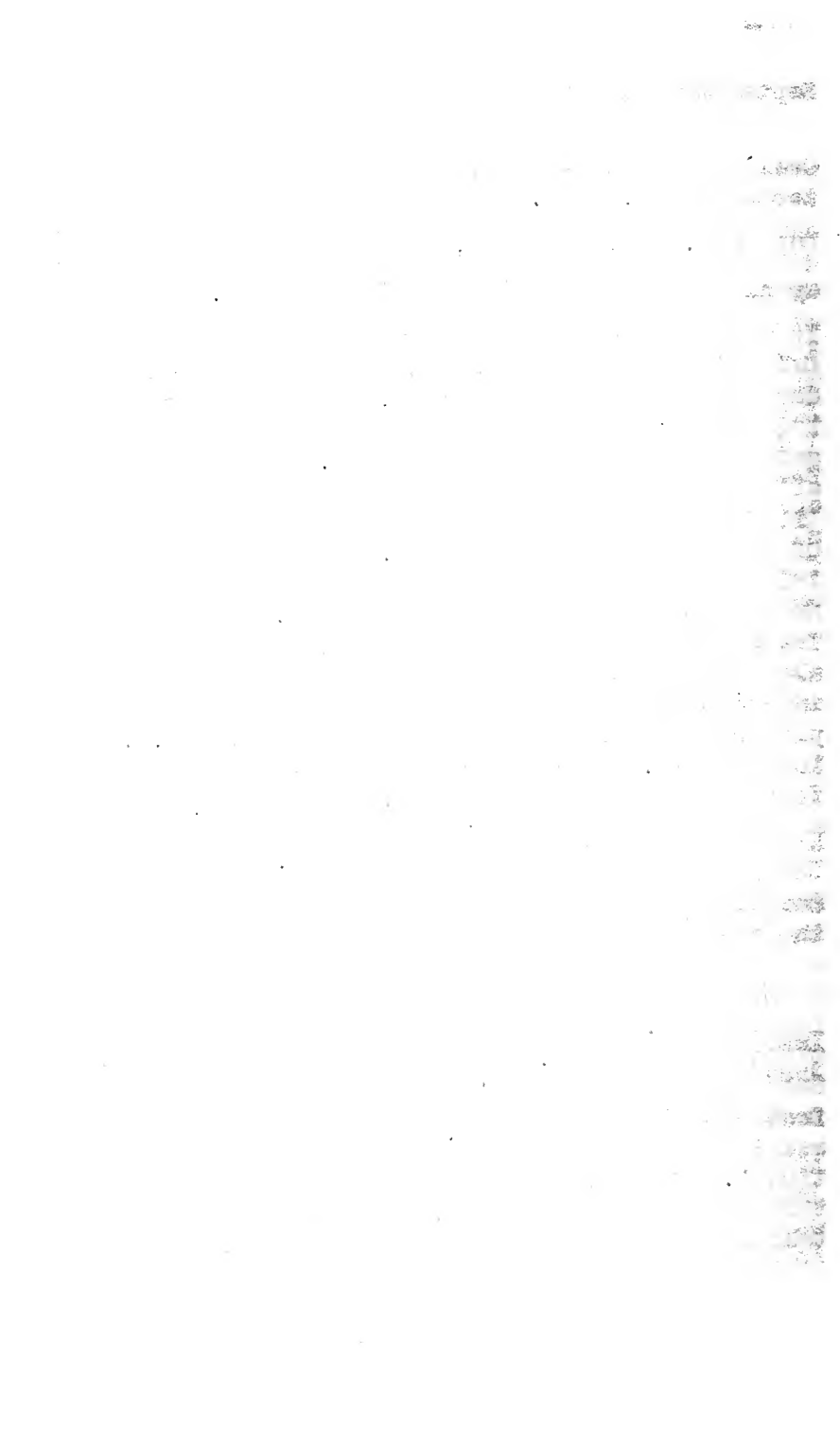
Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
September 28, 1958.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks promise regular letters.

It was good to set foot on land again at the Paris Orly airport and to know four or five wretched days at sea had been avoided. As my telegram briefly indicated the trip over was not only a safe one but also very enjoyable. I felt fine all the way even though we were thrown about a little bit during the night when we hit the top of a storm over the Atlantic. But one of the crew told me later that morning they simply went up another 2000 feet and got out of it. Our big Trans Canada Airlines Super Constellation roared along for about twelve hours straight after leaving Montreal and set us down as gently as you please at the London airport around 10:30 a.m. London time. From there it was only an hour and five minutes flight to Paris, just time to have a lovely hot dinner served us high up over the English channel and northern France.

Father Fred Black brought me out to Malton Airport in Toronto Thursday afternoon and what a surprise was in store for me on seeing Greg, Paul and Patty come out of the air terminal apparently looking for someone. They had just arrived about five minutes previously. We had a pleasant visit indeed as the plane didn't leave until over an hour from the time I checked my luggage through (it wasn't overweight) and was given my boarding ticket. The call of my flight finally came over the Public Address system, however, and we had to take leave of each other or one another. A final





September 28, 1958

73

wave to them as they watched from the roof of the terminal marked the end of my vacation in Canada and from there on it was the return trip, and by quite a new means of travel for me. I must say my emotions were many and mixed as I mounted the steel stairway and ducked into the huge plane that turned out to be almost as wide and high and more comfortable than any bus I have ever taken. But when the four big motors started turning over I was so excited and curious to know just what a take-off was like that any traces of fear or misapprehension had completely disappeared. It was all wonderful from start to finish and should I find the time within the next few weeks I'll try and write you a more complete account of it.

I hope you had a pleasant trip back to Lindsay Wednesday night and that it was not too late when you arrived there. I was sorry to leave you rather hurriedly, but as the six o'clock bell was already ringing I didn't want to appear in the refectory too late.

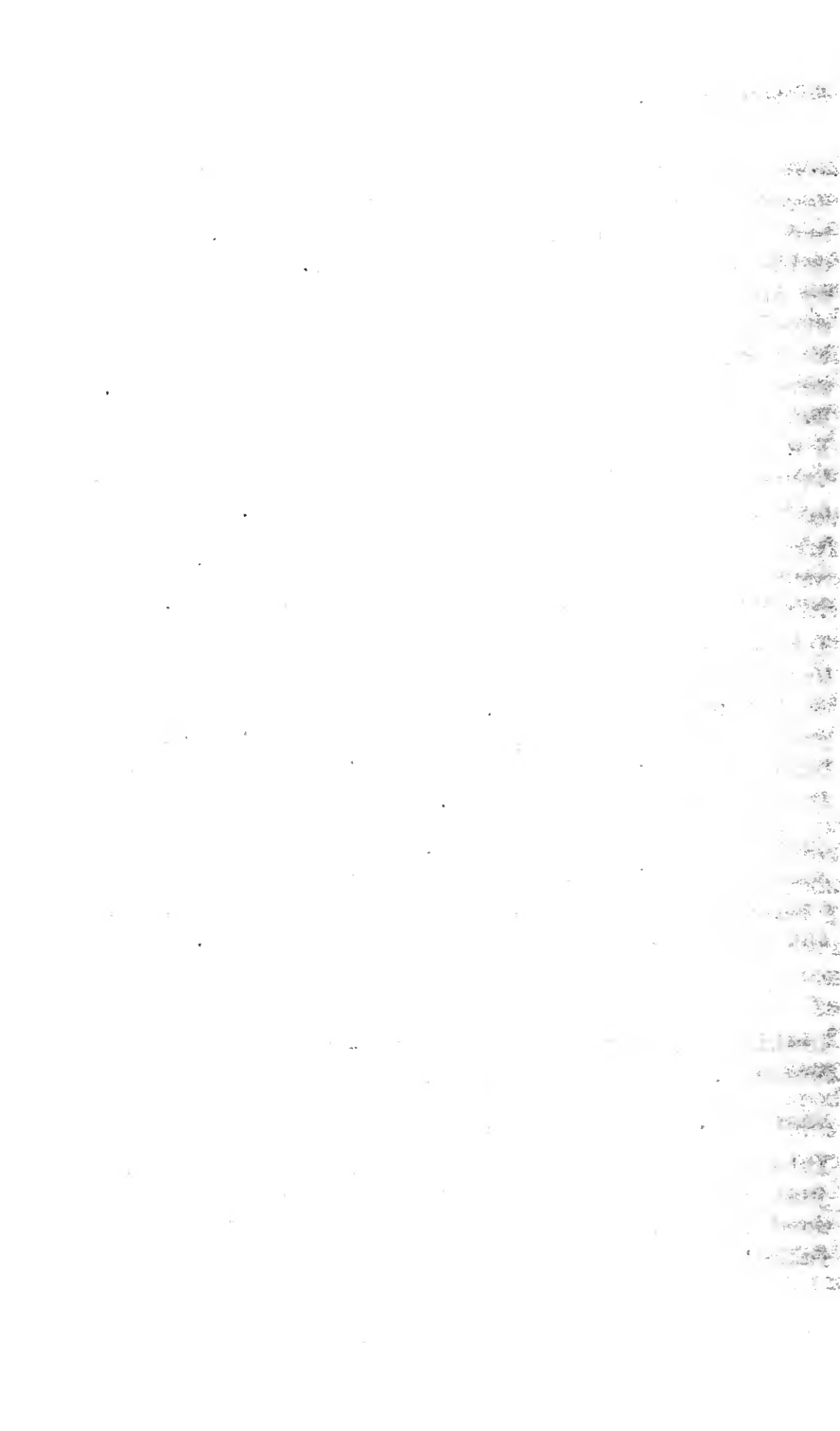
Everyone is well over here, although Father René Robert doesn't look too healthy; he has been complaining of bad stomach and kidney pains, and the doctor thinks it might be gall stones.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 5 octobre 1958.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kin,

It's Sunday morning over here and there remains just time enough before dinner to send you off a word or two. I said Mass this morning in an old folks' home just over the other side of town, and



October 5, 1958

74

have been saying it there for the past week. The chaplain fell ill last week-end, collapsed at the altar just after Communion time, and has been, of course, in bed ever since. But I saw him this morning after my Mass and he seems to be much better. It was a weak turn that he took due probably to over fatigue and perhaps also to a heart that is starting to play out a little. In any case he hopes to be on his feet before too long, and we shall continue to say the seven o'clock there each morning in the meantime.

Well school is under way again, in fact it is in full seing. I already have a pile of things to correct on my desk, but they can jolly wait till this afternoon. Our enrollment is up this year, and the number of boarders too; last year we had 97 boarders, this year it is 110. It is too early to say just what sort of students we have this term in the freshman class; they are all very eager the first few days, and as far as English is concerned, quite amused at finding themselves uttering words and sounds they have never uttered before. The amusing angle will wane somewhat when they hit between the eyes in their first test. I have the same classes as last year, what would roughly correspond to Grades 9, 10, and 11 with more students in each class, but with the number of papers per week cut down considerably for which I am extremely grateful. We started off the school year with a day and a half of retreat for all the boys, which they made pretty well considering their age. We shall make the other half of the retreat later on in the year, probably just before Lent; it will be another day and a half too. Breaking it up seems to work out better than giving them three days in a row. They can only hold so much at a time.



October 14, 1958

75

Observations on the weather in France and about the floods from heavy rains.

Notes the growing popularity of General DeGaulle.

Promises an account of his trip by air.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 14 octobre 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

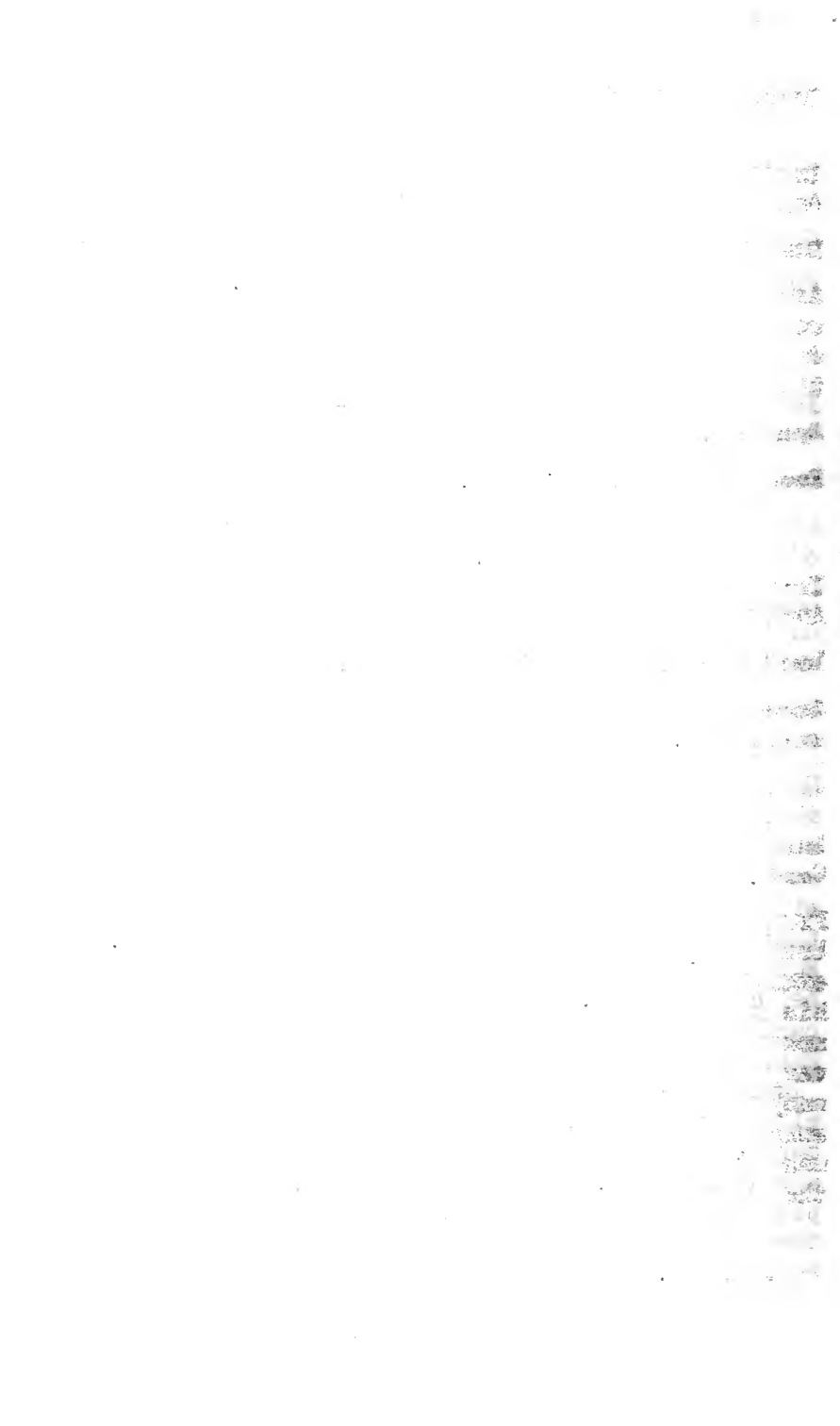
Acknowledges letter with news of the taking down of a landmark elm tree.

Laments the death of Pope Pius XII and comments on the press publishing the story of his death while he was still in his agony.

Some observations on the conclave to elect a successor.

We are well into the class work of the new year now, and the pupils are gradually abandoning their spirit of holidays to settle down to more serious work. The new boys however in the first year are still pretty strange and can't seem to understand that we ask so much of them in the way of work. But they'll work their way into the general stride before too long. Last Sunday I was out to the parish of St. Basil where I had the nine o'clock Mass and another four or five miles from there to Luac where I said the 11:300, preaching both places of course. The curé who usually takes care of these two parishes was away on a pilgrimage to Lourdes, but he is back now. It was a pleasure to say Mass in the church of St. Basil, the parish in which our Community made its first beginnings.

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October 20, 1958

76

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 20 octobre 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letters. Is sending a handwritten copy of the account of his trip back because he did not have time to type it out. Expresses thanks for parcel with fruitcake and preserves.

Speculation on successor of Pius XII.

Received letter from Lou and Jean.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 18 novembre 1958

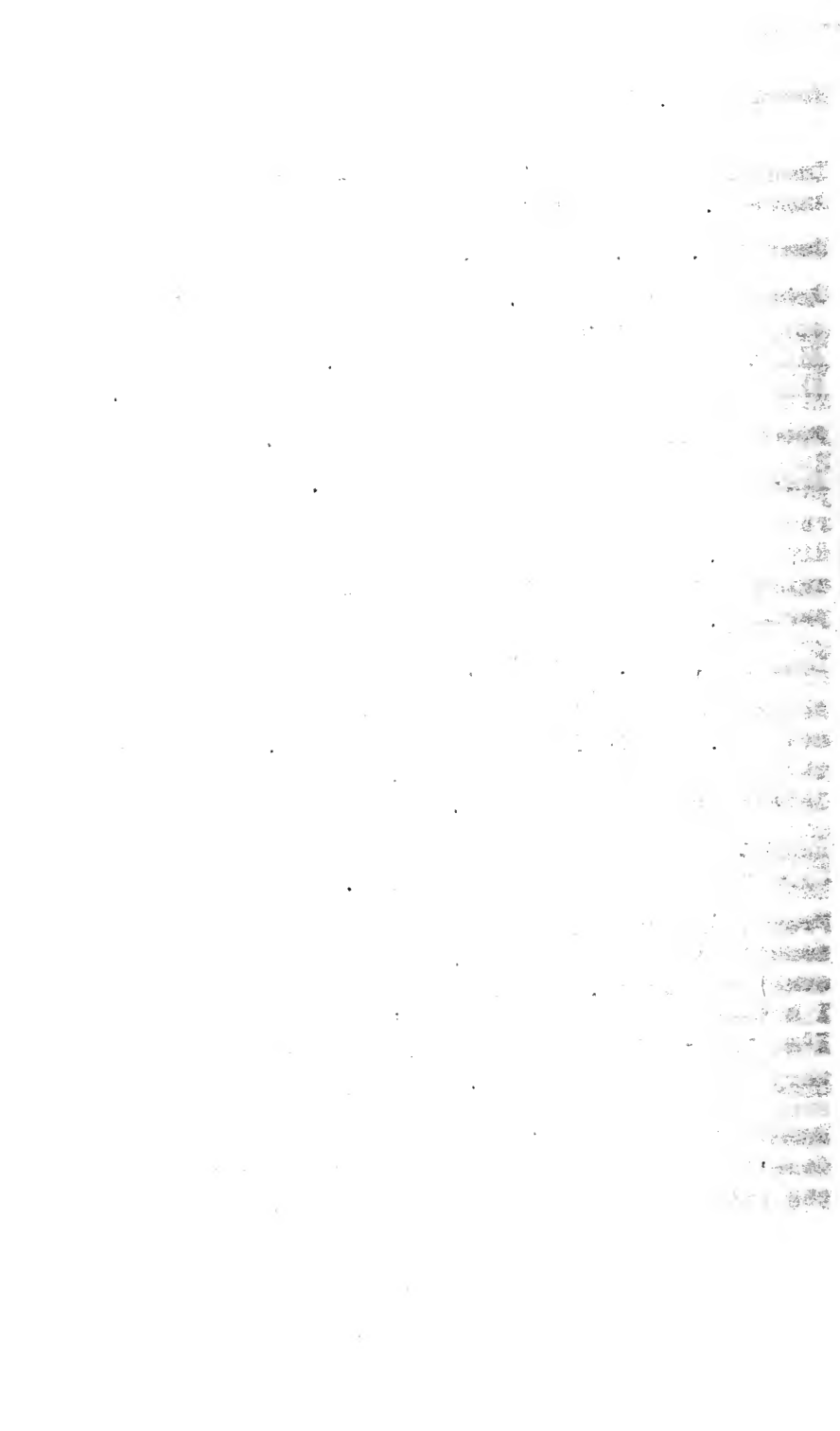
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter of November 12th and Mass stipend. Apologizes for late letter. Expresses thanks for parcel of clothes. Received a newsy letter from Lou and Jean.

Regrets that the Holy Father did not name more Cardinals for the United States.

From your accounts the church is going to be beautiful when completed. Father Carroll has excellent taste, and if the artists carry out his ideas the way he wants I'm sure you will be most happy with the results. You also mention a very dry Fall this year. It seems to me a good many people were complaining about a very dry summer too in Ontario when I was there, but it wasn't especially for lack of rain! Let's hope the situation will right itself soon.

\* \* \*





November 25, 1958

77

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 25 novembre 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks acknowledge letter from Anne.

We are all pretty well over her except for a few victims of political fever that make temperatures rise during election time. Everyone went to the polls last Sunday to elect the deputies for the House of Representatives. They are still too many parties despite the De Gaulle reforms with the result that the people are just about as badly divided as before. And many a heated discussion arises over the particular merits of the different parties. Yesterday at noon I thought we were going to end the meal by throwing cups and wine glasses at each other. But one consoling quality of temperaments over here is that the flames die away just as quickly as they flare up and no particularly hard feelings are harboured afterwards. No one was elected last Sunday as no candidate had a sufficient majority, at least in our constituency here, so the people have to go back to the polls next Sunday and try again. Meanwhile we'll go on discussing the merits and demerits of those who are running, though I must confess it all leaves me rather indifferent since I have no vote over here, being a foreign citizen. I'm just as happy that it is that way.

Observations on the overcast weather.

Remarks on how good roasted chestnuts are for dessert, especially with a dry red wine. Very popular in France.

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December 10, 1958

78

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 10 décembre 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks on sending of Christmas cards.

We received the sad news of the death of Father Basil Regan yesterday, and what a shock it was to all of us! To all appearances he was in good health, but he collapsed in the classroom while teaching and died in a few minutes. He was both principal and superior at the new St. Joseph's College at Ottawa, having gone there just in September for the opening of school. For years and years he was principal and superior of St. Michael's College School, first in the old building at Bay and St. Joseph Streets, and then in the new school at Bathurst and St. Clair. He is surely a big loss to our community as he was a man of considerable experience, a very excellent teacher, and only 46 years old.

European television to carry the Consistory for the making of new Cardinals.

The latest installation in our venerable old college here has been a TV set for the boarders. What do you think of that? It was bought from the proceeds of a raffle that Father George Beaune held a short while ago. The kids sold enough tickets not only to pay for the prizes of the draw but to purchase themselves a television set, and a very nice one too. Of course their programmes are very limited, we only let them watch it two evenings a week for an hour, though undoubtedly a special telecast will come up every now and then which they will be permitted to see.

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December 19, 1958

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It will actually be of more use to the boarders than the day-students, though the latter did most of the work in selling the tickets.

Closing remarks.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 19 décembre 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Excuses late letter by reasons of pressure of setting and correcting examinations.

Acknowledges letters from his mother and one from Kevin LaHiff, Fort Lee, New Jersey.

Yesterday afternoon, Thursday, the free afternoon over here, we went out on a walk with the boarders into the hills and wilds to look for greenery for the crib - holly, mistletoe, branches, moss, etc. That is an annual outing just before the Christmas holidays and one that the boys enjoy very much. They carried home ten times more stuff than we shall ever need, but that doesn't matter too much; the important thing is that they will have participated in the building of the crib. In fact we usuall have two cribs, one in the chapel of course, and the other one in the main parlour. Father Wally Platt has the job of erecting the one in the chapel, since he is head sacristan and I the other. We always recruit a number of willing helpers each year, boys who are only too glad to get a chance to do something else than study in the study-hall.

Explains meeting with Father Dubbery. Closing remarks.

\* \* \*



December 27, 1958

80

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 27 décembre 1958

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks deal with weather and extend Christmas wishes.

I was out in a parish about 20 miles from here, Saint-Julien-Molin-Molette, the same place as for the feast of All Saints. There are only about 1500 inhabitants, but I think all 1500 went to confession the day before Christmas; in any case the curé and I kept hearing and kept hearing nine a.m. until about 8:15 p.m. We took a bit of time for dinner and supper of course. The church was packed to the rafters for the Midnight Mass which I had the privilege of singing and it was followed immediately by my second Mass, a Low one, in thanksgiving, but I think the entire congregation remained for it. There are some parts of France which are very practicing and that one seems to be one of them. I said my third Mass later on in the morning, about 9:15 just after the curé had finished the 8:30, and it being more or less in private and unannounced there were only a very few in attendance. The curé took care of the other Masses and preached at them all, so no one can say he did not do his part of the job and then some. Later on in the afternoon we had Vespers, sung in French, and very well sung too, followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Around 5:00 p.m. the curé drove me home again in his nifty new Dauphine, so there was the feast of Noël in the parish. The choir sang quite well a three-part harmony Mass and a number of French carols which I enjoyed immensely. The long confessional session and the





December 27, 1958

81

ceremonies following closely after were a bit tiring, of course, but we have the time to rest up now, as school doesn't re-open until Jan. 5.

Acknowledges Christmas parcel from 33 Glenelg Street East, Lindsay, which arrived on the morning of December 23rd.

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Institutions Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 2 janvier 1959  
Premier vendredi du mois.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Jere we are into another year already, and let us hope it will be one filled with all kinds of spiritual goods for you. New Year's came in more or less like any other year over here, some of the confreres waited up till midnight to ring in the new and wish each other the best, but I for one toddled off to bed around ten and woke up in 1959. Our weather has been delightful, almost as warm as in April or May, though with a few frosts at night. Just this afternoon I was out walking with Father Marcel L'extraite, one of the French Basilians, and prefect of discipline in the school, when we came upon a family having their lunch on the grass. I remarked to him that one would scarcely see the same thing in Canada the day after New Year's. Though mind you, it's a bit unusual for over here too, as we could very well be having much lower temperatures.

Expresses thanks for letter and gift of money.  
Still on holidays and enjoying them to the fullest.

\* \* \*



January 7, 1959

82

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, 14 7 janvier 1959

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter with Mass stipends.

Acknowledges a parcel sent from North to Father Wally Platt and himself by Sister Mary Agnes and Mother Saint Francis.

We are back in the swim again as far as classes and supervision are concerned, but with an additional undertoe current this term: we have to fill in for one of our hired laymen who left us suddenly the night before school opened. He was not a teacher, but supervised the study hall, the dormitory and recreation periods. So until we find a replacement, we have taken on his duties - the dormitory in the morning and one study hall period per day have fallen to me. All the professors have their little contribution to make. But it's not difficult work, just a bit time consuming.

Closing remarks.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, 1e 13 janvier 1959

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks concern the weather in Canada and France. Acknowledges a box of mats to cover chairs in his room. Acknowledges letter from Kink with High Mass for Mrs. Walsh.

We're having a tough time with our lay members on the staff. First one of our studyhall masters takes off without notifying us (having been paid



a month in advance) and now our mathematics teacher, also a young man of about 26 years of age has to abandon all his classes by reason of nerves. The doctors have ordered at least a month of complete rest, and perhaps even longer, so poor Father René Robert, superior and principal, has to scrounge around to assure 16 hours of math a week. As yet none have come to me, nor will there be any, I think, but Father George Beaune has taken over one class, the same one he had last year when a very similar set of circumstances came to pass at the end of October, and other members of the staff have been asked to take on additional hours as well. We hope to find someone before too long, but in the meantime we are running short-handed. It's too bad none of the French Basilians was ever trained in Mathematics and Physics; their formation was almost purely classical - French, Latin, Greek, etc.

Did you hear of the terrible catastrophe in Spain where a dam broke and the released waters flooded a little town of some 600 inhabitants, Rivadelago? The disaster occurring in the small hours of the morning, around 1:30 a.m. I believe, most of the people were caught in bed and hadn't time to flee to safety ahead of the rising water. The number is well over 100 drowned already, and they are still finding bodies. What a tragedy! and it has particular significance for Father Wally Platt and me as we had occasion to drive by that part of the country back in 1956 during the Easter holidays with Father Clarence Drouillard when he was studying in France. We had come across the border from Portugal in our car and hoped to be able to reach the city of Zamora where we would find a service station to replenish our gasoline tank, but our indicator marked less than one gallon and we had a good thirty miles to go. Rather than

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• *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*

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January 21, 1959

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take the risk of running out somewhere along the way, for that part of Spain is very sparsely populated and even the small villages that one does find don't have much modern undertakings, as service stations, we stopped where we saw a lot of men and machinery at work, and which happened to be a construction company working on a dam. We told them of our predicament and they very graciously sold us 15 gallons of gas, which was enough not only to bring us to Zamora, but on to Valladolid where we spent the night. I don't know if it was the same dam, as we didn't particularly notice the name of the place, but I shouldn't be at all surprised if it was. In any case those poor people are in our prayers, as you can well imagine. Better close now.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 21 janvier 1959

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks draw attention to new ribbons in typewriter after Kink had complained of how faint the old ribbon was. Acknowledges letter with Mass intentions for Leo Burns.

An epidemic of flu has struck the college, with the result that we are teaching classes that are only half there, and less than half. The Sister infirmarian has a job on her hands these days looking after them all - the infirmary is full and about fifteen are confined to bed in the dormitory. But the attack is not a very serious kind: in two days the temperature falls back to normal and the lad feels better. Some have even made an appearance in class after only one day

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January 28, 1959

85

in bed. We expect by the end of this week the worst will be over. Maybe it will start laying the professors low then; so far we have escaped. Hope you are well there and that nothing similar has put you under the weather. You can't be too prudent in changeable winter weather. Try and keep enough heat in the house whatever you do; it is money well spent.

Account of wind storm from the Mediterranean.

Letter from Sister Mary Agnes explained the parcel from North Bay which was made up by the Precious Blood Sisters.

Anecdote about his English class.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le January 28, 1959

De Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologizes to his father for missing his birthday on the 20th. Did say Mass for his parents on the following Sunday. Acknowledges arrival of the third and largest chair mat.

Our bout with the flu doesn't seem to be quite over yet; we still have a number of boys down, out, and under the weather, though our classes are almost back to normal as far as numbers go. Some of them got up too soon, I think, and went home to spend Sunday with their folks, with the result that around Monday night the infirmary bes were filled up again. So far it has been confined to the students, all the professors being able to keep standing, so we keep our fingers crossed and try not to consume too many microbes.

Report of a British discovery of a new type of dealy bacteria.

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January 28, 1959

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Tomorrow we are bringing the kids down to one of our cinemas to see Moby Dick. Did you ever read the novel? It is a wonderful story, perhaps the best of the 19th century American novels. I had to study it once, it being on the course in literature; that is how I came to read it. The author is Herman Melville, a name which brings back memories of a public speech session at the Collegiate which you and I attended once, Mom, and where I delivered a talk that you had in large part prepared for me, "Why Worry?" Do you remember that too? I couldn't tell you what year it was, probably around the Spring of 1939. In any case, it seems to me one of the prizes, was it the third of the fourth?, was a book by Melville which we carried triumphantly home.

Best to all once again, with my prayers

\* \* \*

Institution Secondair du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 6 février 1959

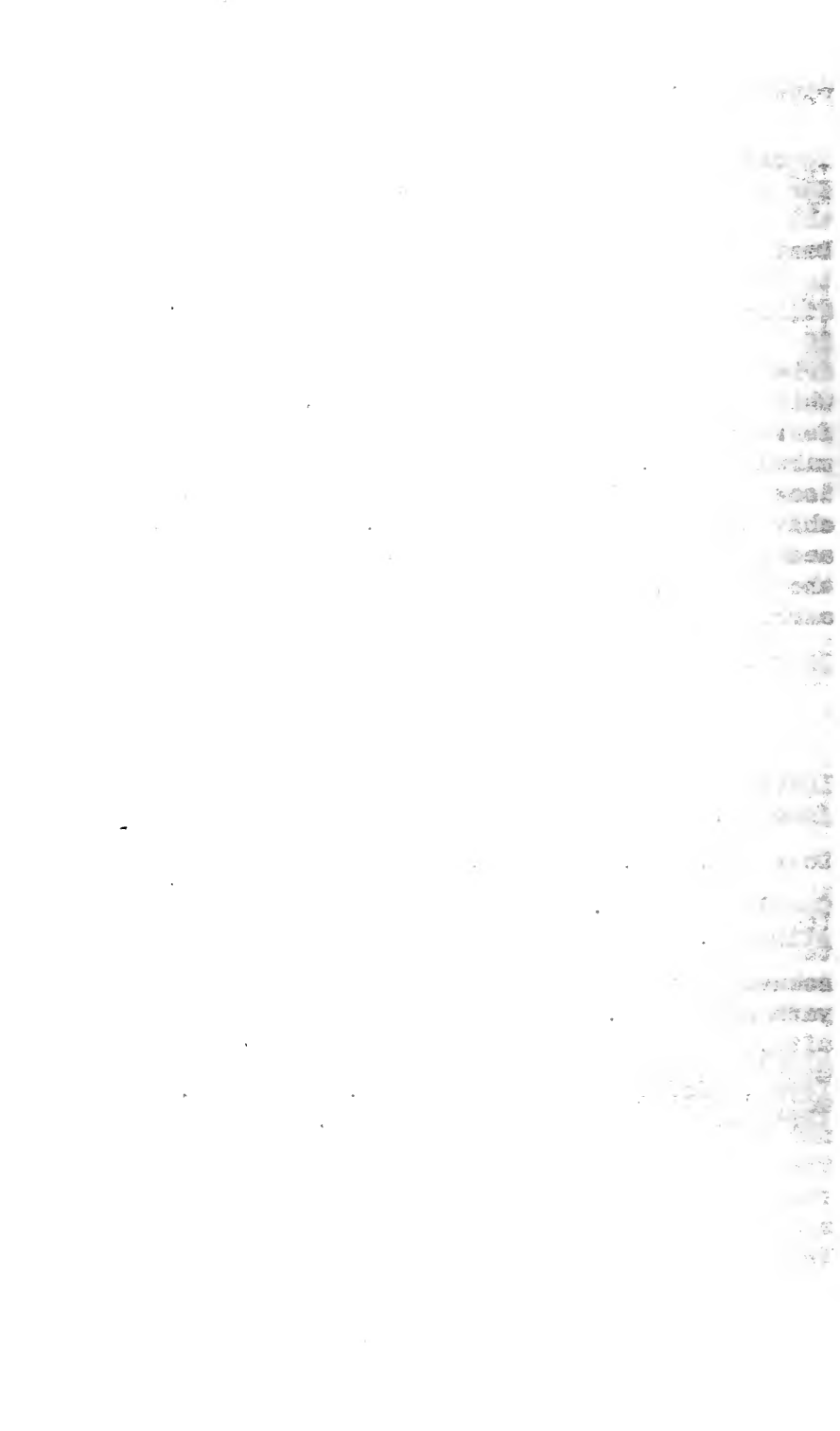
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks. Acknowledges letter with Mass stipends.

Acknowledges a monthly letter from Lou and Jean with snapshots.

Stories about students stricken with: rheumatic fever, dislocated bone in spine, and polio. All three are responding to treatment.

\* \* \*



February 13, 1959

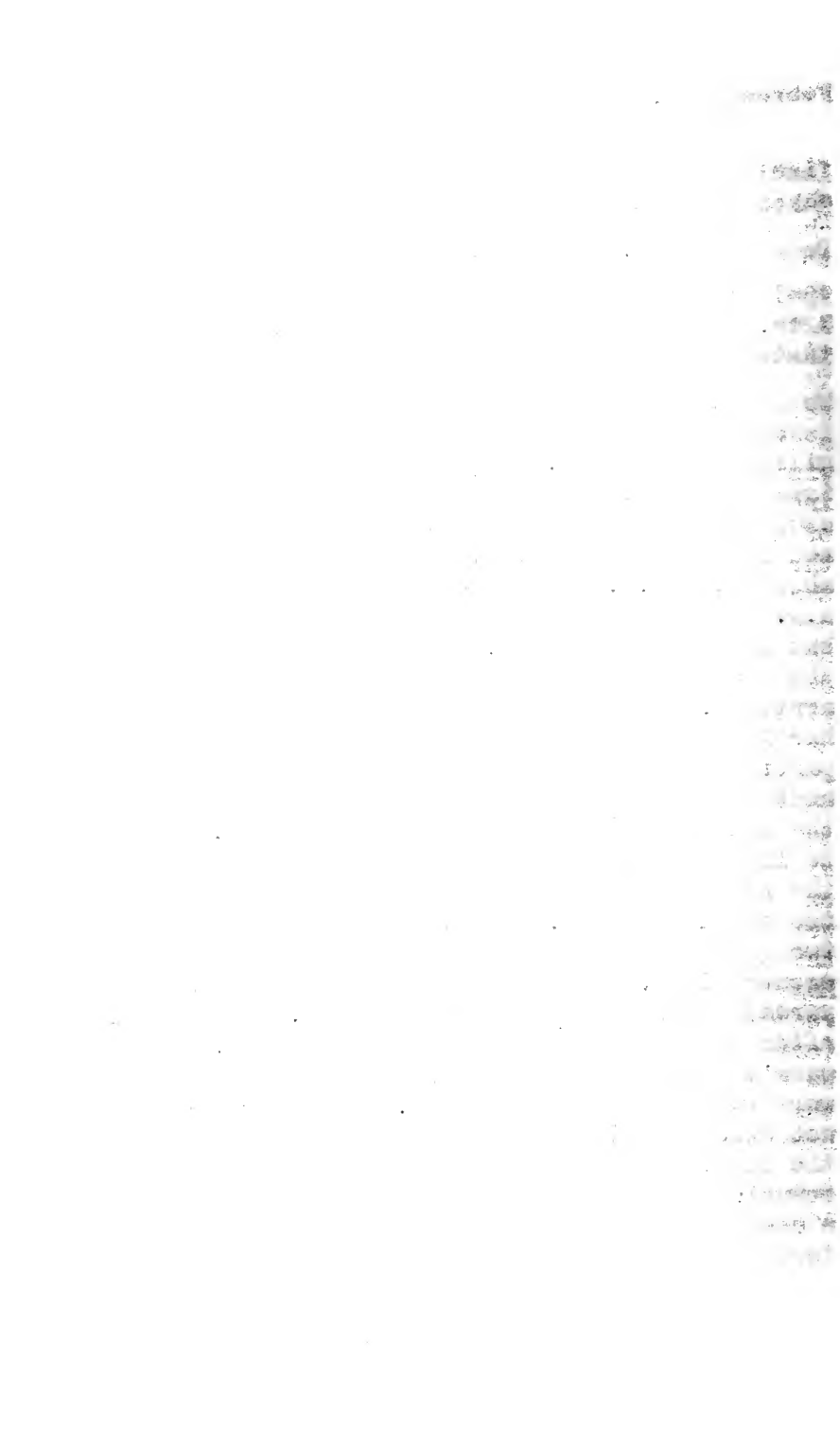
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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 13 février 1959

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologizes for missing mother's birthday on the 12th. Account of the annual retreat, second instalment, for the students.

We had two diocesan priests in to give the conferences one of whom is parish priest about ten miles from Annonay. He takes care of two parishes in fact, so he had to be replaced in both churches for Ash Wednesday. Father George Beaune and I did the replacing, leaving here in the car about 7:15 a.m. to be there for the Mass at 8:00 a.m. That may seem like a lot of time to allow, but it wasn't too much, considering the roads and the fact that we had to prepare everything upon arriving. It was a rich experience as you could hardly imagine two more lost in the hills churches, particularly the one I went to, which was about another three miles farther on in the hills than the one where Father Beaune pontificated. I had to leave the car on the village market place as the street leading right up to the church became too narrow to pass. Oxen, chickens and pig or two greeted me as I picked my way through what seemed like various backyards (not to say barnyards) to arrive at the church door. I discovered after that I had approached the back way, but wasn't sorry for it as it turned out to be really more rustice and picturesque. The villagers are not exactly village people as we might understand the term, but farmers that own land in the surrounding area and live together, more or less, in a compact community. A few were waiting for confession when I entered the church, and when the



first one asked to go to confession I had rather shyly to ask her just where the confessional was. There didn't seem to be any in sight. She pointed to a box in the corner of one of the side altar chapels, and believe me it was little more than a box, with a chair set in it and a hole cut in either side and a curtain covering the entrance. To get in I had to duck to pass under the curtain rod, and once in, while still sanding to pu on the stole, noticed my head and shoulders were clearly visible over the top. It was with a mixed feeling of amusement and relief that I sat down out of sight of the few people in the front part of the nave. Only a few feet away hung a hefty rope that I tugged lustily to announce to every living soul in the countryside that Mass would soon begin, and of course, that the ashes would be distributed. No altar boys showed up, they were all at school in the village where Father Beaune had stopped off, so the congregation did all the answering, and I must say, did it very well. The ashes were duly blessed, not without certain minor difficulties when it came time to sprinkle them with holy water and incense them, and duly imposed on all present. Though quite tiny the church was very clean and well-lit, something a rarity in this country or any of the Latin countries. After Mass I drove back to join Father Beaune in the rectory there for a bowl of coffee and some bread (one of the four fast days in the year over here). We then drove back to the college bringing one of the boys with us who is a student here and whose home is somewhere up that way.

Acknowledges letter of February 7th with local news.

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March 5, 1959

89

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, March 5th, 1959

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks. Acknowledges letter from Pete and Mary and family.

This afternoon while doing a bit more work on the tennis court (it's Thursday with school out at noon) I noticed some of our peach trees in blossom. It was a surprise and is apparently very early even for this part of the country. Dear help us if freezing temperatures decide to take over again before Spring.

We shall be having a visit from Father Terence McLaughlin before very long. He is on the water somewhere between New York and Le <sup>H</sup>avre. I think he plans to spend a day or two with us before going down to Rome. Father George Flahiff will be over to give us an official inspection shrtly after Easter.

Closing remarks concern the Globe and Mail's overseas edition criticism of the Diefenbaker government for closing the Arrow project.

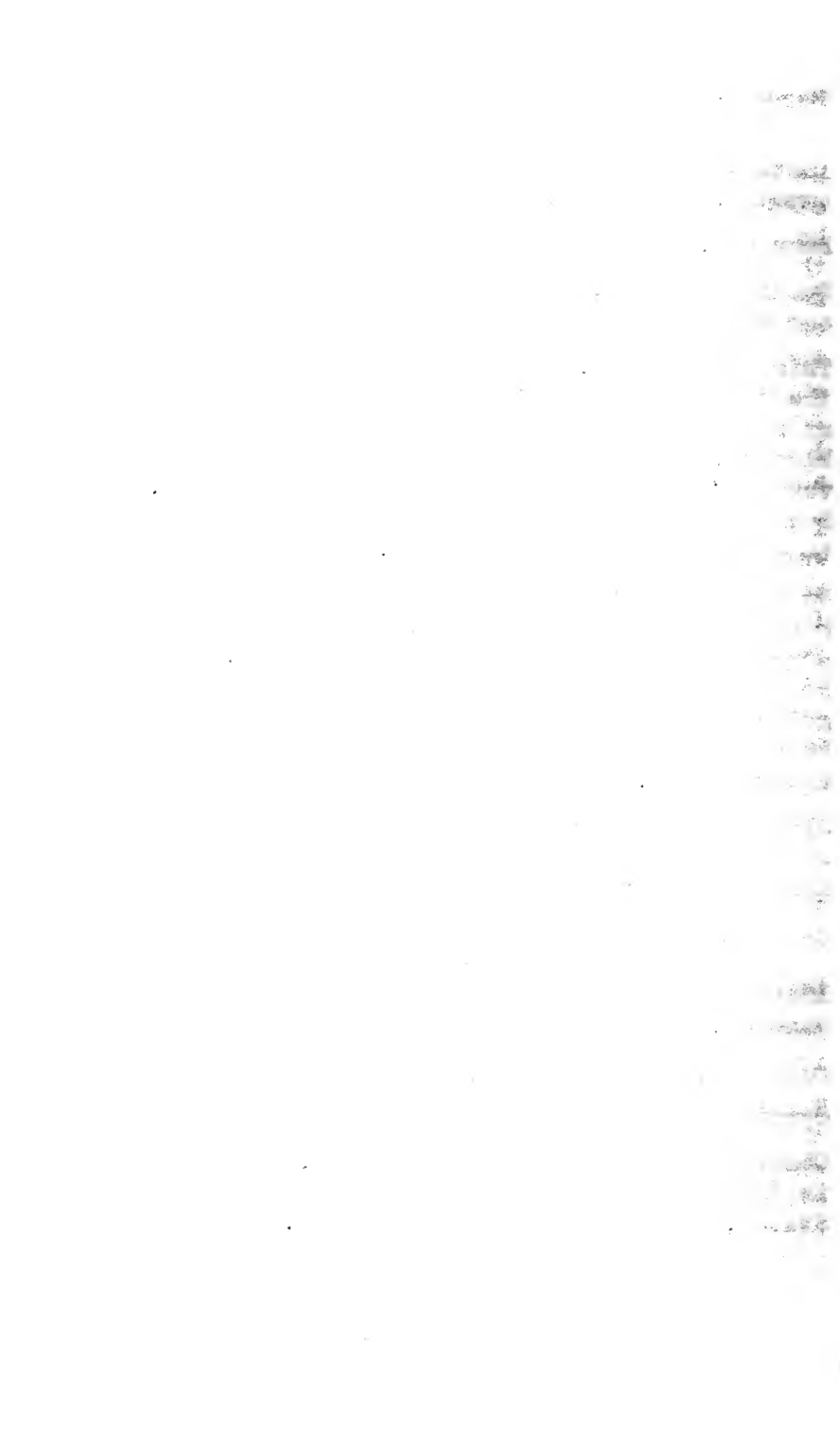
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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 14 mars 1959

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks apologize for late letter.

Observations on weather in Annonay, on an account in Time magazine of big-time farming in the United States, and on the French elections.



March 14, 1959

90

We have carpenters, painters, plumbers, electricians, mason, and I don't know what all in the house at the moment, making a terrible racket in the room normally reserved for the Bishop. It is receiving an overhauling from top to bottom, not only for future episcopal visits, but for the more immediate visit of Father George Flahiff, le supérieur général. He is expected to come down from Paris Quasimodo Sunday, April 4th or 5th, I believe. He will stay about ten days or thereabouts before going on to Rome.

I have begun to make some remote arrangements for another stay in Spain this summer, nothing more than a few inquiries as yet. It is likely that I shall be teaching a little more Spanish next year, so another session with the natives themselves will be of invaluable help. I doubt if it will be Madrid this time, but it is really too soon to say.

Closing remarks tell of a slow student's difficulties with English.

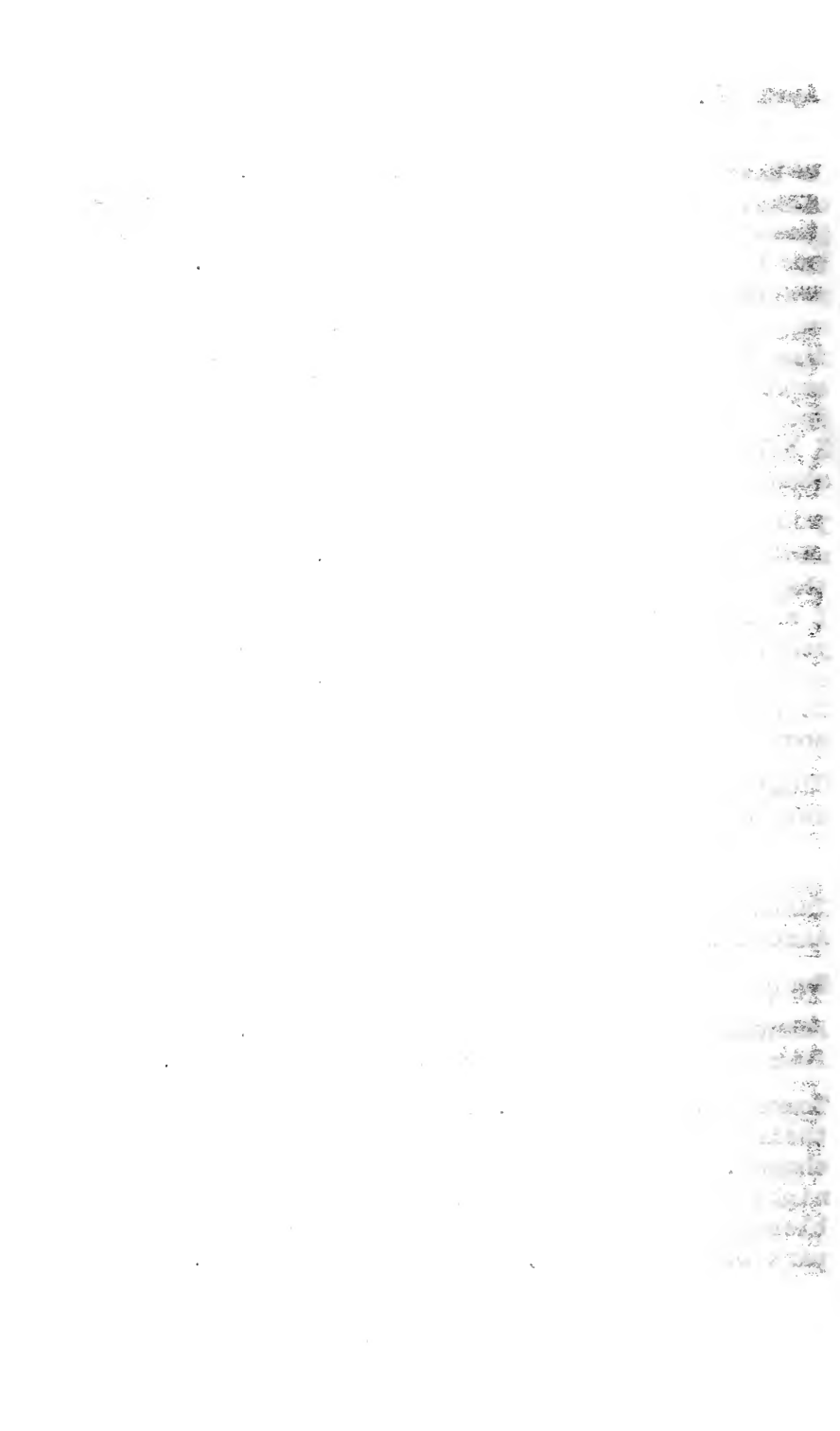
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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 21 March 1959

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter with Mass stipends. Three or four inches of snow in Annonay did not last.

Tomorrow, Palm Sunday, our students are to make their Easter duty here at the college in our chapel. None of the boarders is going home tonight and the day-hops will all come back for the blessing of the palms (box-wood branches in this part of the country) followed by the Mass. We



April 2, 1959

91

usually have the blessing outside in the playground and procession into the chapel from there; that is if the weather permits. A stiff south wind is howling up at us today; it may well have whipped up rain clouds by tomorrow morning.

Easter confessions start this afternoon for me (not counting those of our own students) at Vavance, a little town not very far from Annonay. The curé put in a frantic call for someone to help him from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. today, and I being free am the predestined one. The penitents will be mostly women, as they have the custom of making their Easter dauty on Palm Sunday.

Closing remarks speak of the French elections, congratulate Michael on his public speaking, and wish all a Happy Easter.

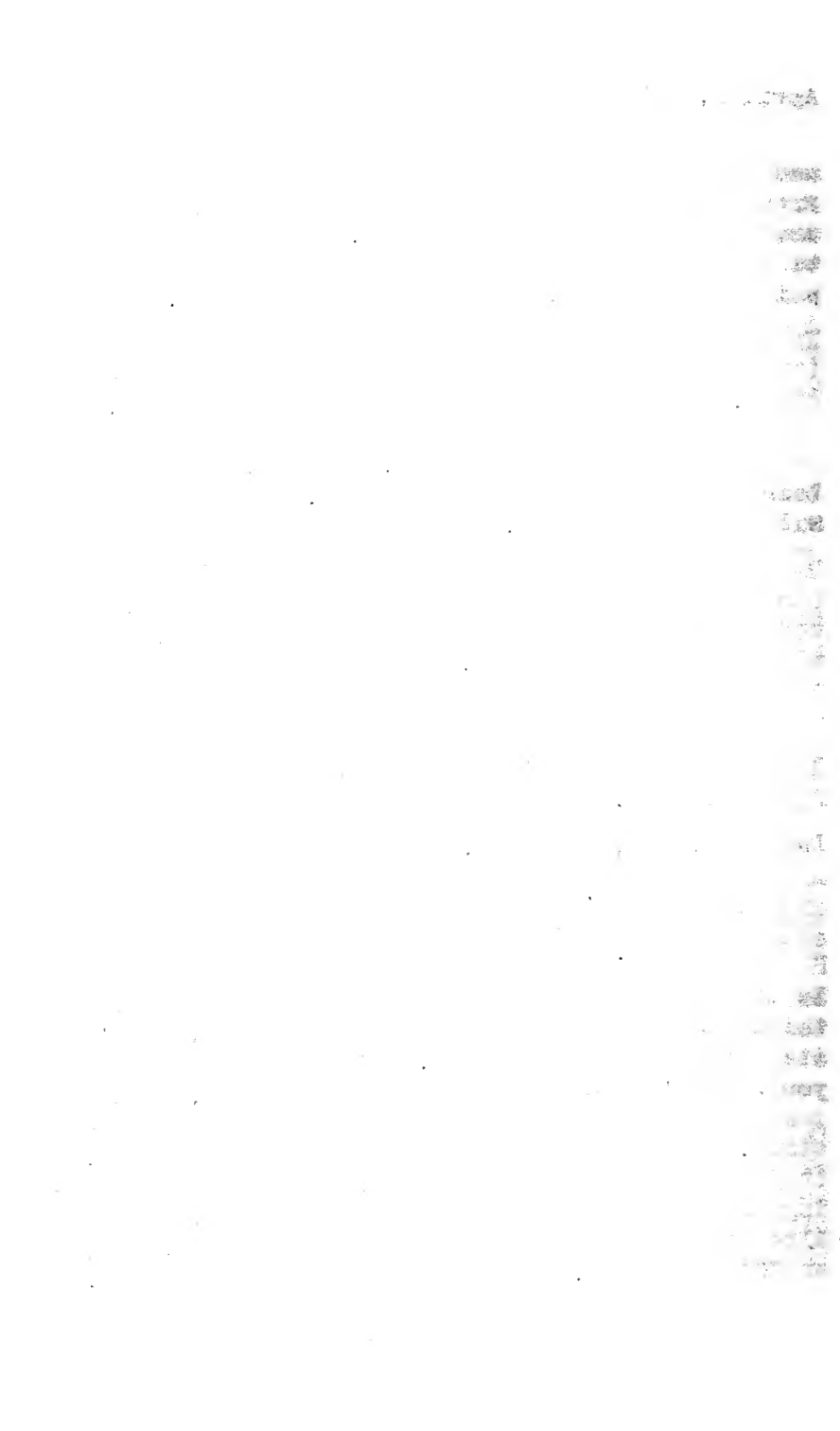
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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
April 2, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks. Acknowledges letter from mother and gift enclosed. Speaks of Easter in Canada and in France.

It wa so thoughtful of Father George Flahiff to telephone you before leaving for overseas, wasn't it? He is a very kind man. I'm not suprised you wouldn't know just what to say to him, being taken completely by surprise; but he would understand. We are expecting him in Annonay Saturday, that is the day after tomorrow. He has been spending some time with the confreres in Paris, and also went to Metz to see Father John Warren, CSB, an RCAF chaplain. His room here is all finished,



April 11, 1959

92

and looks real smart, but the furniture that Father René Robert ordered hasn't shown up and won't until Saturday afternoon! So it is going to be nip and tuck - the man is due in at 7:00 p.m. If there's a hitch in anything, as there frequently is in this town, the General will find a lovely room waiting for hi, with nothing in it.

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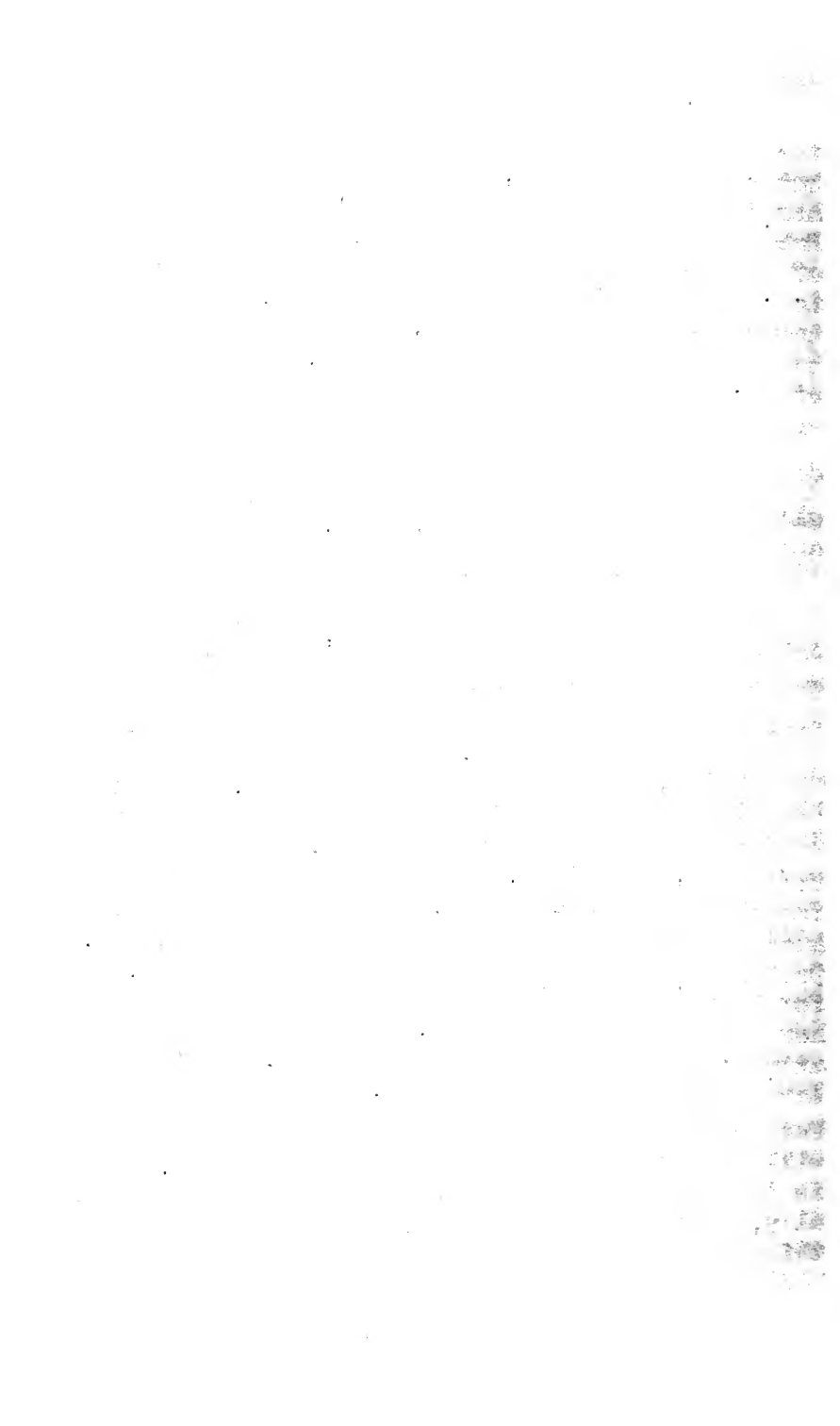
Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Saturday evening, Paril 11, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter with Mass stipends. Sixteen years have passed since Gertrude's death.

Too bad you didn't have a chat with Father Gary Poupore; he is an excellent conversationalist, though very soft spoken. He seems so mild and unassuming, you would almost say timid, and yet he holds one of the highest RCAF awards from the last war for bravery over Germany. He was a navigator, I believe, and can talk for hours on end about his experiences; not so much about himself as about those with whom he came in contact. He has also spent some time teaching in Texas, but I don't think is too lavish in his praise of the students down that way, or of the climate either. If ever he comes back to St. Mary's you'll have to bring him over.

Father George Flahiff is with us this week and will probably stay until later on next week. He is interviewin each one of the confreres individually, which takes some time, depending on all the things to be discussed. He was glad to tell me





April 11, 1959

93

that you were enjoying exceptionally fine health, but apologized for perhaps frightening you by his long distance call. Today he and Father René Robert have gone off on a visit to the sanctuary of St. Jean Marie Vianney - the curé d'Ars, which is not so very far from us, about 80 miles or thereabouts. He is happy to have the occasion to go this year, it being the hundredth anniversary of the saint's death. They both expect to say Mass at the altar where his remains are preserved.

School has re-opened after the Easter recess.

Closing remarks deal with Mike's public speaking and his future education in high school.

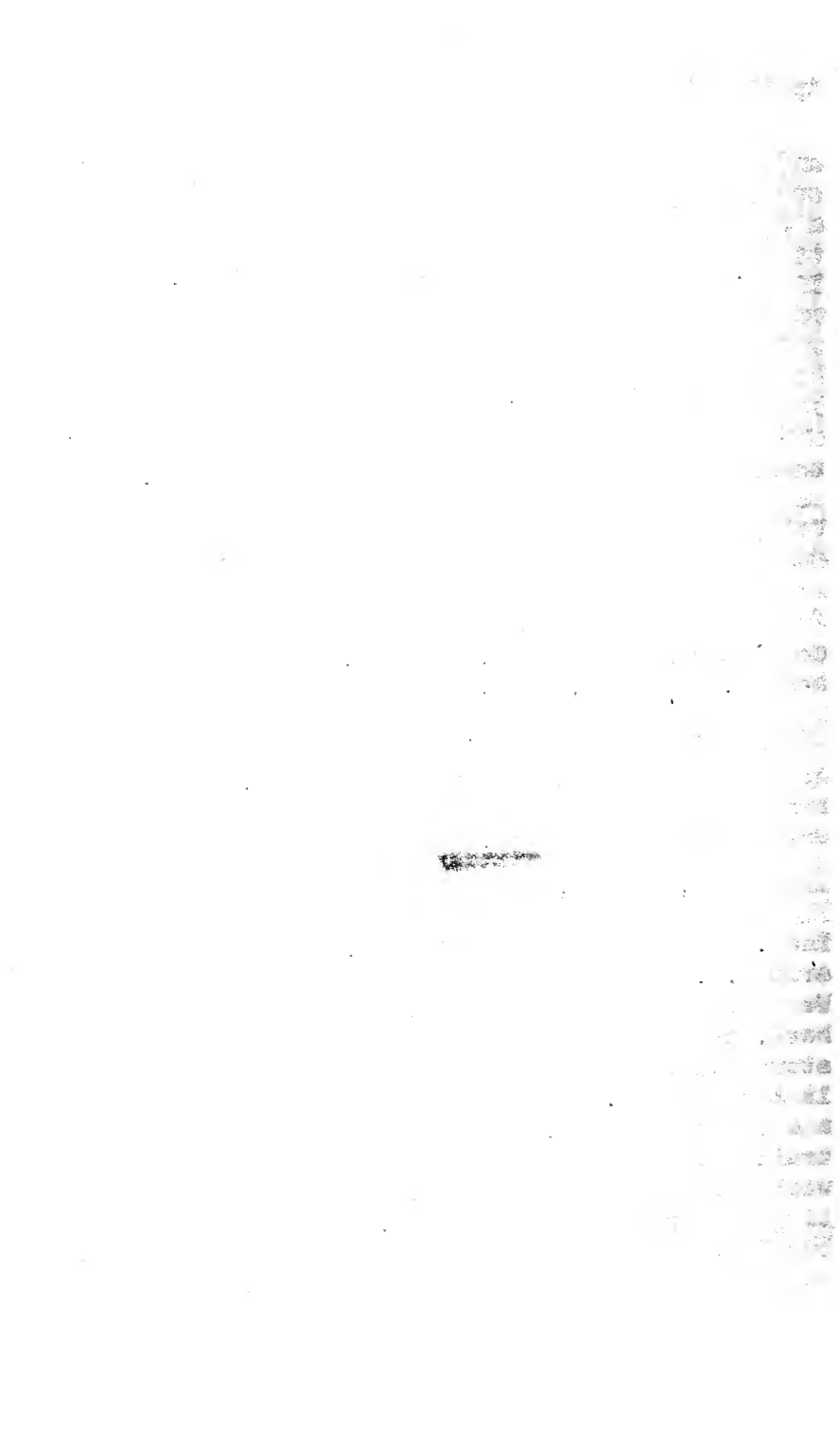
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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Monday, April 27, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter with Mass stipends. Asks that his sympathy be extended to the families of Peter Greenan and Leo Rodger.

Yesterday, Sunday, proved to be a day of travel for me though it hadn't been planned as one before hand. After the students' Mass, somewhere around 9:00 a.m. the telephone rang bringing a message for Father Fernand Geneston, one of the Basilians here, to the effect that his father had had an attack during the night and wasn't expected to last very long. So Father Geneston not knowing how to drive a car, and not having any bus or train connections within a reasonable time that would bring him to his home, I was commissioned to chauffeur him in all haste. Away we roared in our 2CV, a little car about the size of the Volkswagen but much lighter and not so fast. Over hill



and dale, around corners on two wheels, under and over bridges and by-passes we whisked along over a wet pavement in the rain until we finally came to his little village in the south Ardèche about 100 miles from here. We found his father very weak, for he had spent a bad night, but conscious and able to speak a little despite his heavy breathing. That in itself was a relief as we had kept wondering during the whole trip if we should arrive on time. I left Father Geneston there after visiting a while with the family, and came back by way of Valence in the Rhone Valley where I called in on a former student of ours now in the seminary there. I arrived back at the Collège just in time for Vespers, 6:30 p.m. This morning we received word that the father is gradually coming around, feels less pain and is breathing more easily, so there is some hope that he will rally after all. He is only 66 years old and has been a healthy, hard-working farmer all his life. So one never knows what the morrow will bring - I had a great pile of papers to mark waiting on my desk for a few hours of free time Sunday afternoon and they are still waiting. First things first.

The month of Our Lady will not long in coming around now and with it special special devotions. We plan a pilgrimage on foot to a nearby shrine, Notre Dame d'Ay for May 2nd, both teachers and students, that is those who wish to go. We made it last year on May 8th and it turned out to be a success, though we would like to have a greater number of our boys participating. Maybe they will come a bit better this year.

Closing remarks speak of Mission in Lindsay.

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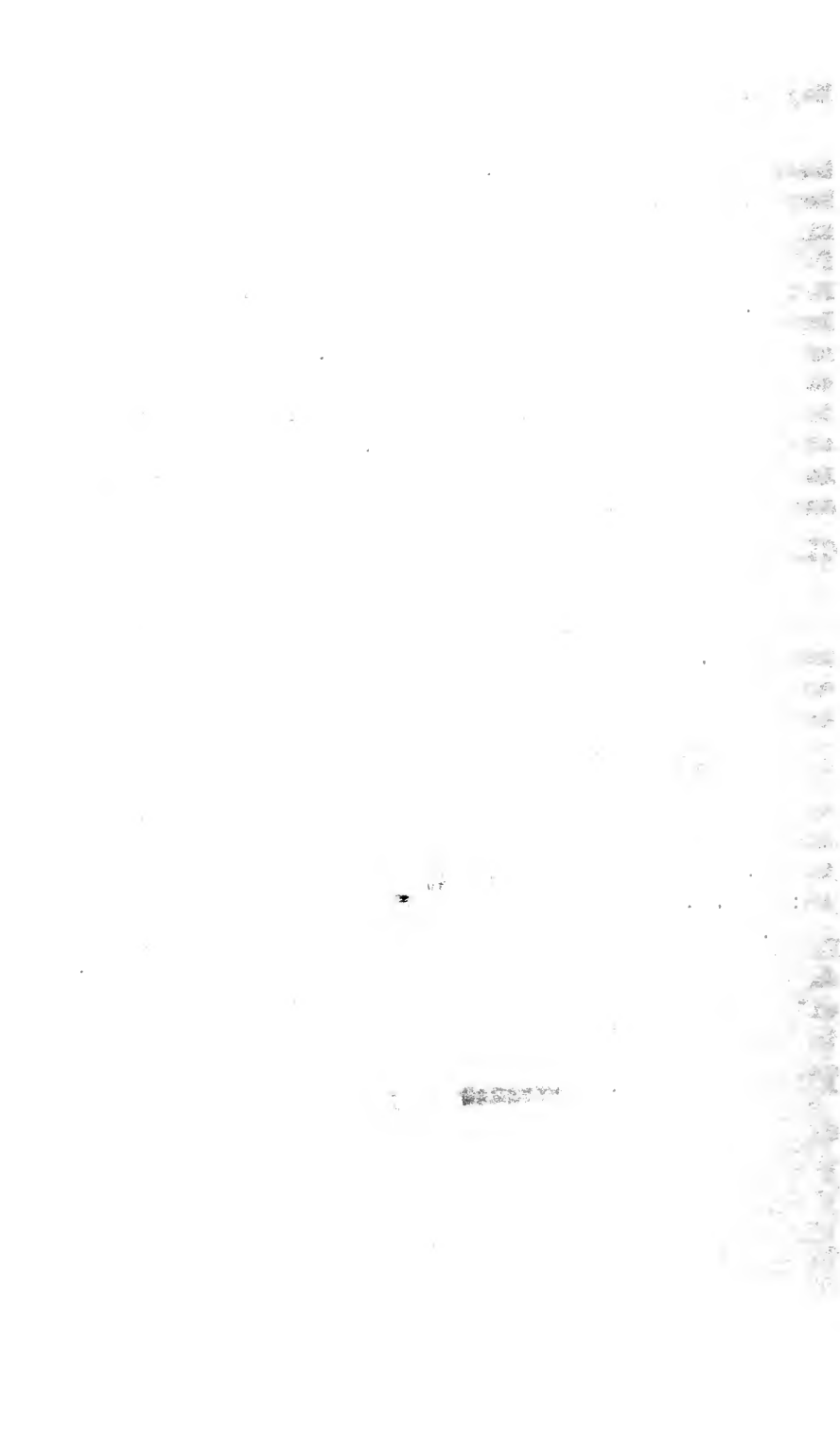
May 9, 1959

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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
May 9, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

A thousand pardons for this long delay. I you haven't thought illness or accident has prevented my writing for the past two weeks. The fact is that I have been almost completely taken up with an outing for our minor seminarians. It is over now, today at noon to be exact, but the preparation and the execution of the plan took a considerable amount of time. I may have told in some previous letter that one of my functions is that of spiritual director to those boys in our school who feel called to the priesthood, and who, for one reason or another, have not gone off to a minor seminary. With the permission of the superior and his council we organized a sort of study session for them in the lower Ardèche at our summer house in St. Alban. Out of 21 who form the total number of such boys at present, 10 signed up for the four day session. I say four days, but actually we only left the college to go down to St. Alban Wednesday, May 6, after classes (4:30 p.m.) and came back to Annonay today at noon. For serious study there remained really just two full days, Ascension Thursday and Friday. The subject of study was, of course, vocations to the priesthood, and the programme was arranged something like what they would have in a regular minor seminary. Prayer in common had an important part to play in the schedule, a conference on vocations in the morning followed by discussion, a question and answer period, etc., plus, of course, a considerable amount of time for games outdoors and hikes in the afternoon. The weather favoured us nicely and our cook supplied good food, so the



May 12, 1959

96

boys were happy as larks. They would willingly have stayed another few days. It is the first kind of such experiment and thanks to the wonderful co-operation of the Fathers here, particularly Fathers Charles Roume, Jean Roure, and Georges Reyhouard, it turned out to be, at least as far as we can humanly judge, a great success. It may be the first in a series of such vocation sessions. Our college, by the way, is on holidays this week, at least from Wednesday to Monday, so that explains in part why they were free to go, both teachers and students.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, Ardèche, France.  
May 12, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges receipt of a lovely typing table cover which softens the noise of the typewriter. Annonay is enjoying summer weather. Fruit crop promises to be excellent.

Father George Beaune is preparing his things these days in his spare time; a week from tomorrow he will be taking the train to go up to Paris, then to Le Havre to embark on the Liberté which will carry him to New York like it did Father René Robert and me last summer. Father Beaune will arrive in Windsor just in time for his brother's ordination in the cathedral in London, Ontario. We are speculating of course on whether he will be coming back to Annonay in September, and the odds seem to be against it, though we won't know until the appointments come out in July. His job





May 12, 1959

97

as recreation master and study hall supervisor was just supposed to be for three years, and they being up this summer, it will not be surprising if a replacement arrives for the opening of the new term in the fall. How the time has flown! It seems so recent that we were dining together at 33 Glenelg just a few weeks prior to his departure, and yet that was in 1956. Much has happened since then - the events of last summer, for example, of which we all hold very cherished memories.

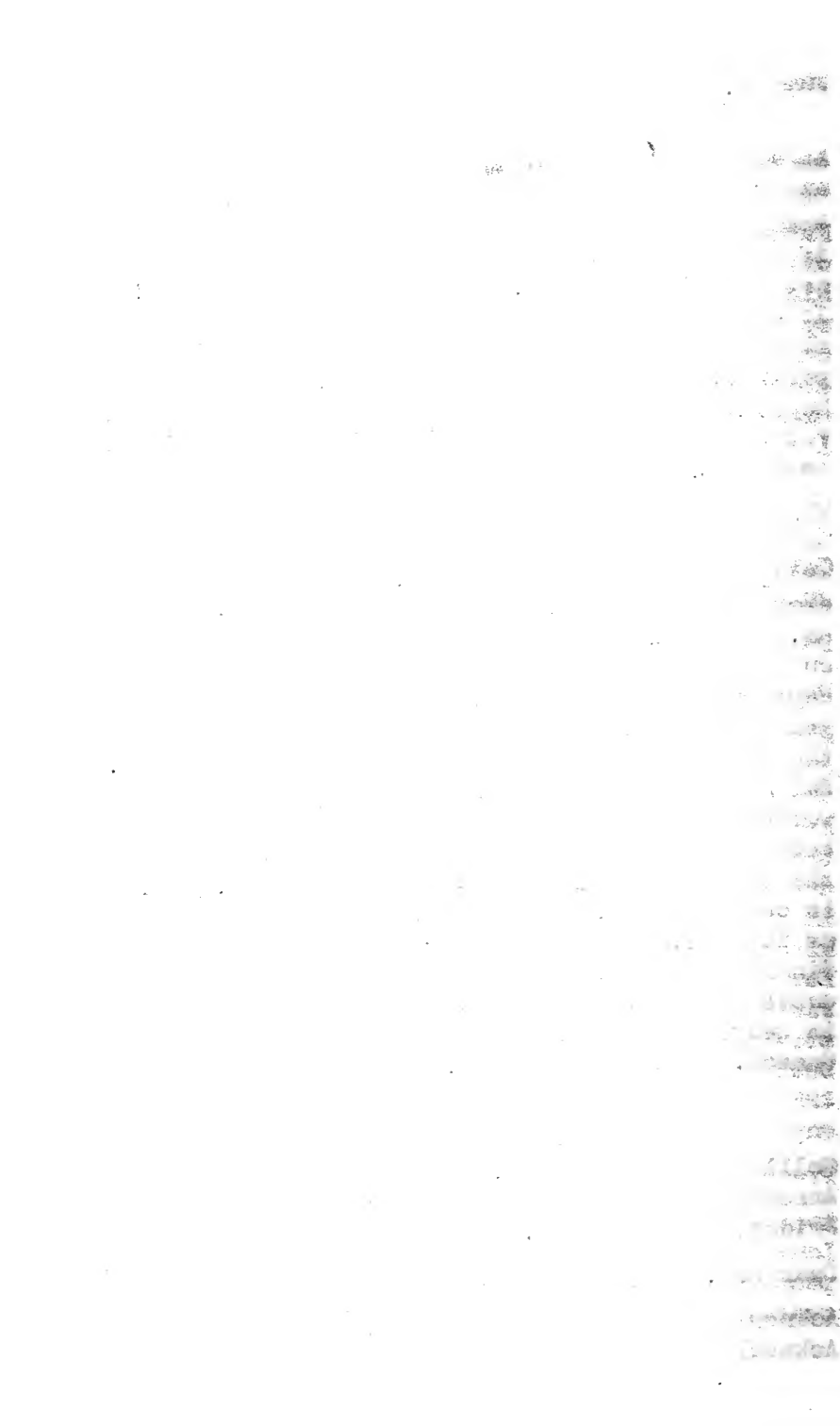
When Father George Flahiff was here he spoke of how much he would like to bring back both Father Wally Platt and me to Canada, but that it was not easy at the moment, there being no one to replace us. The replacement is apparently a rather difficult one since three years of study have to precede our work in the college here, two or three years at least in a French university to obtain the teaching degree that both of us got in 1956. But he did give us to believe that a plan is being worked out whereby one or both of us will come back to the New World before too long. So perhaps the end of our European stay is in sight. This is confidential, by the way, just between ourselves, as it were, since no definite dates were set for final decisions. It would be just as well not to quote me should he drop in on you someday, which is quite possible as he will be flying back to Canada. Better close now.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur,  
Annonay, Ardèche.  
Friday, May 22, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter with local news and Mass stipend.  
Acknowledges other family letters.



June 3, 1959

98

Account of First Solemn Communion of 32 students at the College. The Bishop of Viviers was present.

Father George Beaune is on the high seas now, and will arrive in New York Tuesday morning. As yet his successor has not been named so we have divided up his work among us, which situation will probably continue until the end of June. Two hours of class fell to me, but they are not very difficult ones, requiring only a little preparation since I give the course in another class. Best to all.

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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
June 3rd 1959.

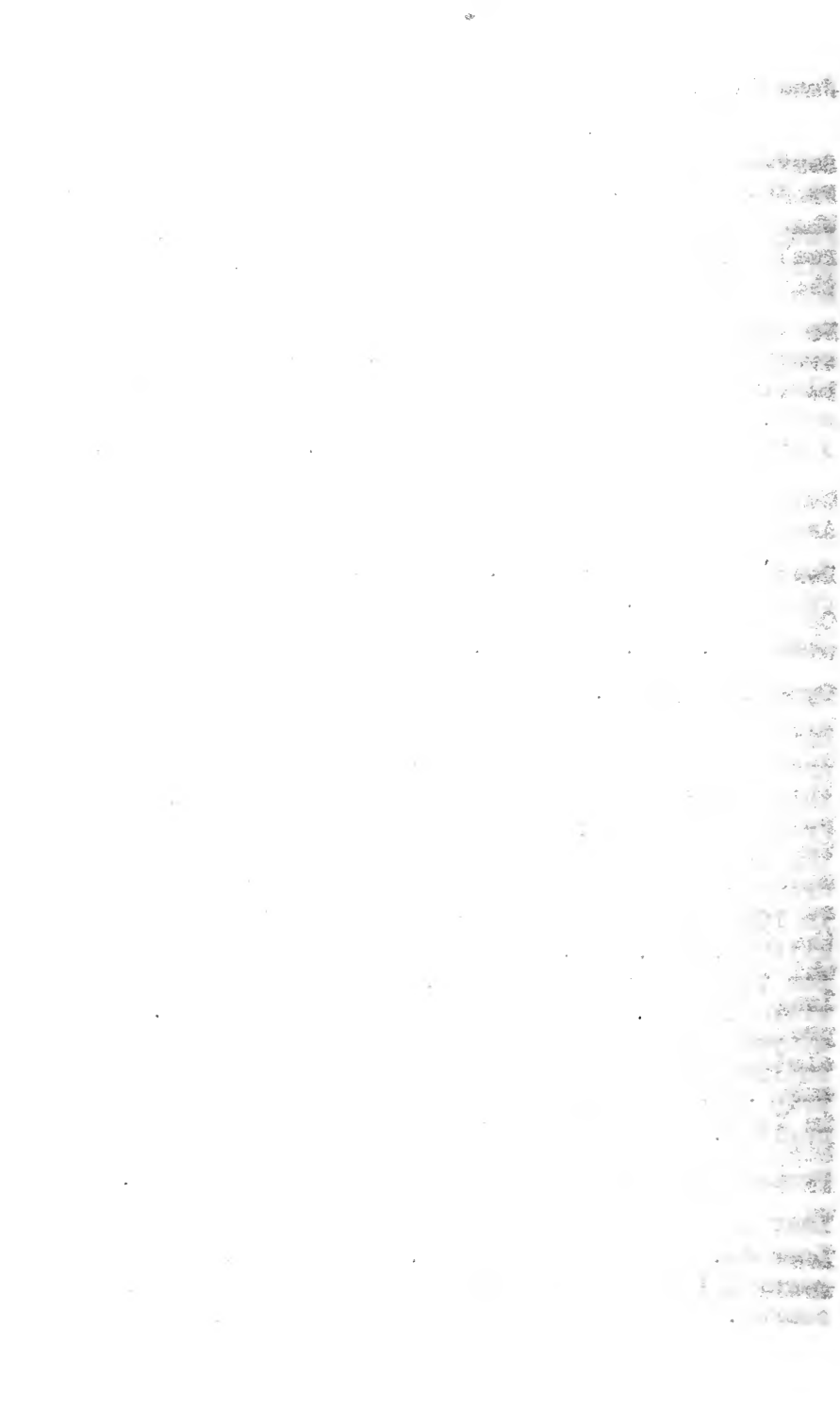
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks.

Did you know today is the feast of St. Kevin? And by a strange coincidence I received a letter this morning from an Irish friend in Dublin, Frank McGoldrick, whose acquaintance I made on the boat coming over to Europe in 1953 and who drove me out to Glendalough when I visited Ireland in 1954 to see the shrine of St. Kevin, his cross, kitchen, bed, etc. Not having heard from Frank for two or three years now, it seemed so appropriate that news from him should arrive today. I stayed at his house for eight days while in Dublin and thoroughly enjoyed the sight-seeing trip he took me on in his car in and about the capital.

Preparations for the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

Last week I reserved a room for two nights at Lourdes, July 28th and 29th, when I shall be passing that way en route to Spain for a summer course. It will not be Madrid this time, but



June 7, 1959

99

Santander, on the north coast, a bit closer to France, and I hope with a more moderate climate. What better place to spend one's birthday. I'm really fortunate to be making the trip just at that time.

No word from Father George Beaune yet, but we expect he arrived safe and sound. Maybe you'll be seeing him this summer. Better close now.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur,  
Annonay, June 7, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks. Acknowledges letter of June 1st with local news and comments on it.

This morning I said the 8:00 and 10:00 o'clock Masses at Saint-Sauveur-en-rue, a village of about 770 people, with about as many on farms in the surrounding area. The Solemn Communion took place at the first Mass, so I got in for more than I had figured on. 63 boys and girls received solemnly, renewed their baptismal vows and presented their lighted candles to the celebrant at the Offertory. The boys were all dressed in white albs with white cincture and the girls in long white dresses and veil - all alike. The curé prefers it that way to avoid excess in expensive clothing on the part of certain families to the embarrassment of other poorer ones. And I noticed in Bourg-Argental, another town on the way a little bigger, that the boys and girls were also dressed in the same style for their Solemn Communion which was to take place at the same hour.

Last Friday, feast of the Sacred <sup>h</sup>heart, we had a whole holiday in our school, since it is dedicated



to the Sacré-Coeur. After a Solemn High Mass at 8:30 a.m. the boys were free to play games, races, etc. for the rest of the day, and what a time they had! One of the highlights of the holiday was, would you believe it, popcorn. I set up a little booth with electric grill, popper, butter and carmel syrup and popped and mixed and sold the whole blessed afternoon. It is the first time I have put it on sale publicly, and to say it was a howling success would be the understatement of the year. It was entirely new for our boys, or most of them, and the making of it fascinated them almost as much as the actual eating. They all want to plant a few grains at home, of course, and grow it for themselves, so that they can pop all they want. So if you ever hesitate about what to put in a package anytime, you can always include a bag or two of popping corn. It is sure now to disappear.

Closing remarks acknowledge package and letters.

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Collège du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay June 18 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks tell of final examinations.

However it isn't all work and no play. Just this afternoon, Thursday which is the holiday in this country, three of us went off to the prettiest little river you ever saw, L'Ay, where we swam and jumped about on the many huge and water-worn rocks for a couple of hours under a torrid sun. The spot is only about 15 miles away, in a green and winding valley between some of the hills that mark our upper Ardèche, but it is so secluded and picturesque that one can't help





contrasting its peace and beauty with the noise and squalor of downtown Annonay. Fortunately, our college is not downtown; on the contrary, it is really perched up on a hill overlooking the city. But nonetheless, it was a pleasant outing to spend a while away from machines and buildings and books and bells - and boys. We went on motorcycles, complete with crash helmets, along a very winding road which offers its own lovely panoramas at almost every turn. Where did we get the motor-bikes? Well, there are two or three belonging to teachers in the college not in use most of the time, and sometimes more. I think at least five of the priests here have one, not counting the one that belongs to the Basilians. So vehicule-wise, we're not too badly off, n'est-ce pas? And don't think those things won't climb over the road. They'll shoot out from under you practically, if you turn the handle in your right hand the wrong way.

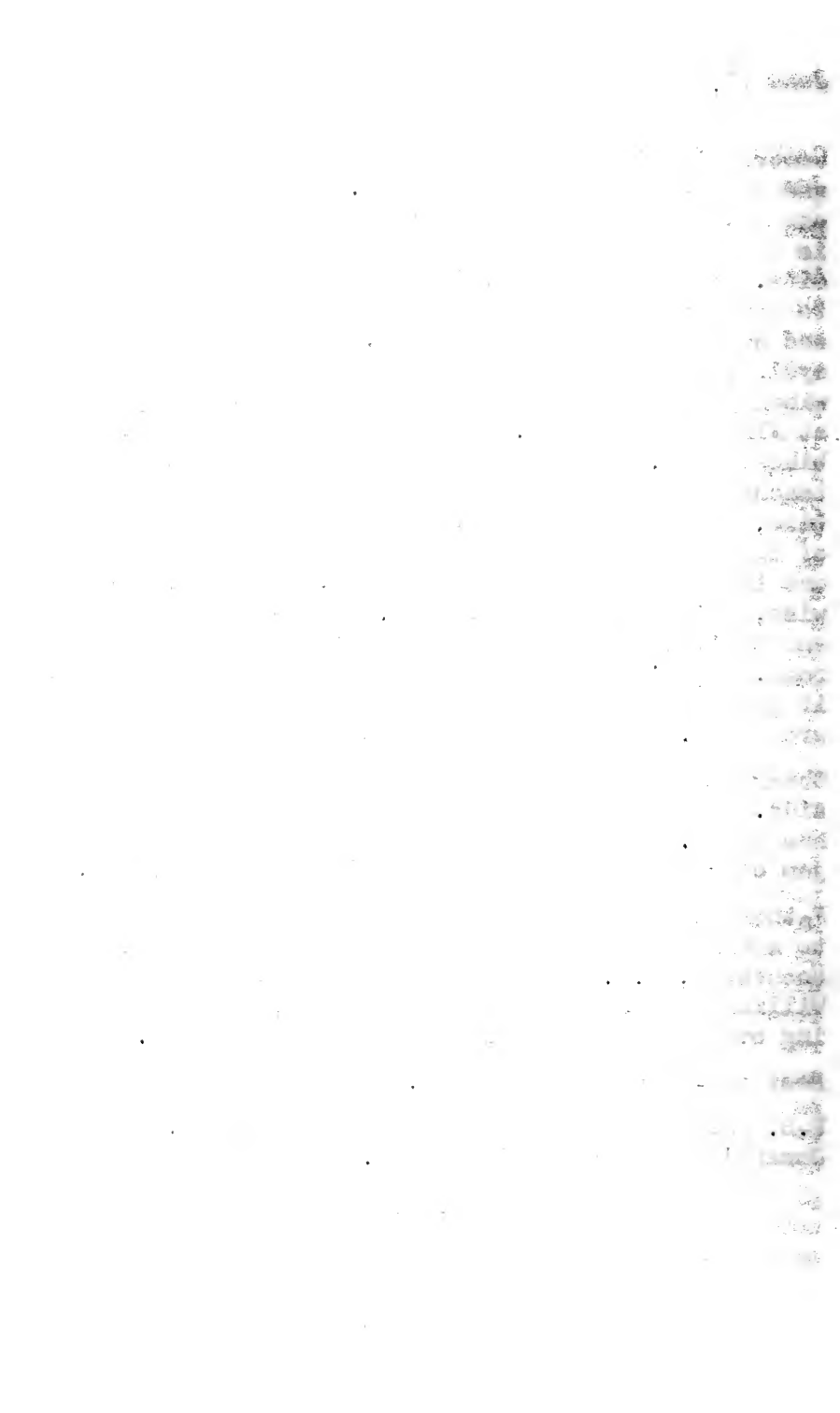
Observations on the beauty of the French countryside. Some of the grain is ripe and harvesting has begun. Sisters in the kitchen picked and made jam of red currants from the college garden today.

Father Charles Principe came down from Paris today to spend a few days with us before going back to Rochester, N.Y. He is going to replace Father William Marceau at Aquinas Institute, who is coming over here to replace Father George Beaune.

Best to all with my prayers.

P.S. Father Beaune has been appointed to St. Joseph's High School in Ottawa.

\* \* \*



June 28, 1959

102

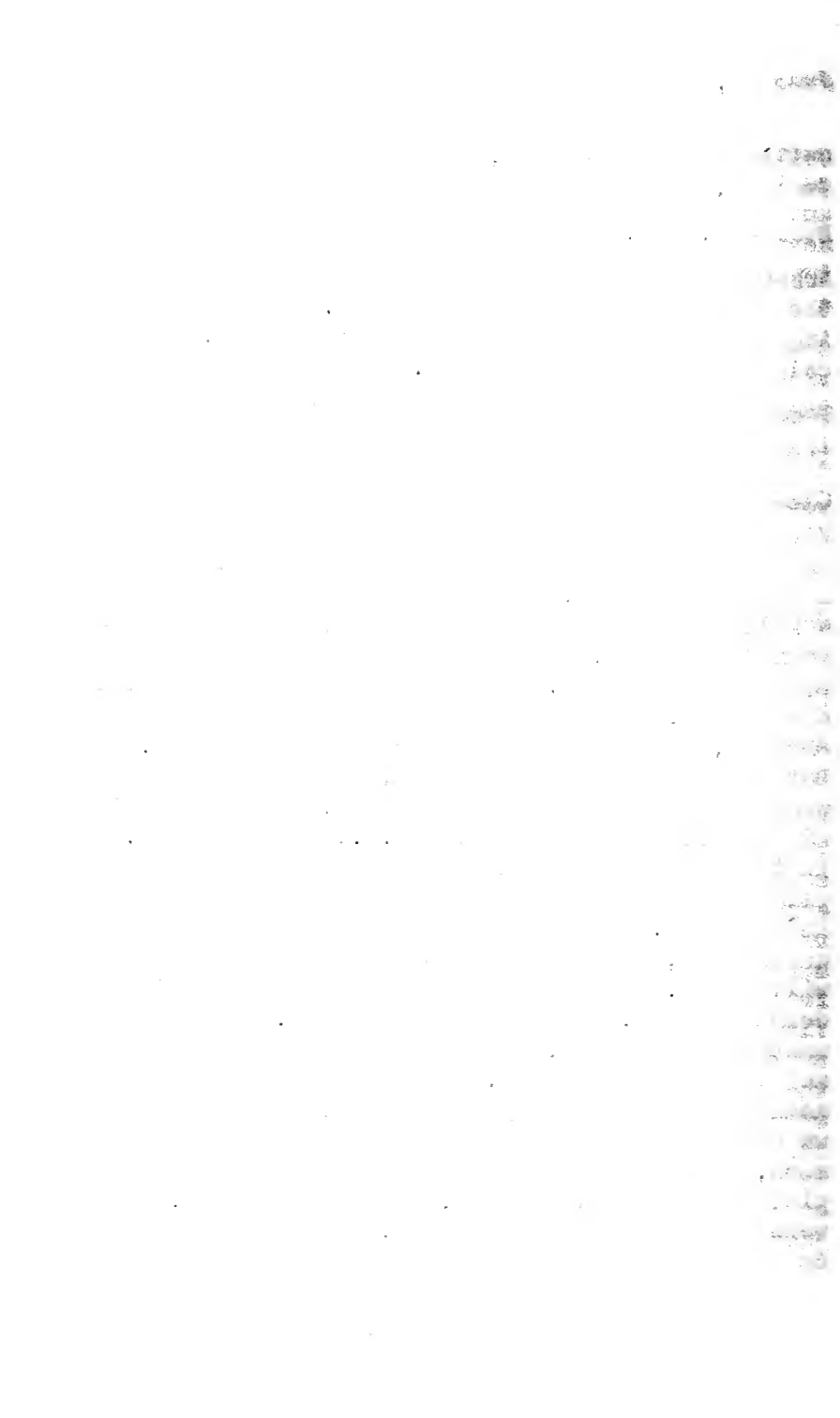
Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay

June 28, 1959

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter and gift on the occasion of the anniversary of his ordination. Will be saying two Masses later in the morning at St. François Parish Church, Annonay.

Tomorrow I shall have the opportunity of renewing the memory of the ordination ceremonies as I am accompanying a group of our boys, 20 in all, possible vocations, down to the Cathedral at Viviers where our Bishop will confer minor and major orders on the diocesan seminarians. It is a school-day here, but the Superior has granted a holiday to our particular group, le club Saint-Dominique Savio, so that we shall have the whole day to go and come. The Mass begins at 8:45 a.m. down there, and it being about 80 miles from Annonay, we shall be on the road fairly early. But with the fine weather now, and with the prospect of no classes the entire day, the boys don't mind getting up around 5:00 a.m., au contraire. In the afternoon we plan to visit a dam and power plant that have been recently constructed on the Rhône River. We have rented a small bus which carries 16, and which Father Georges Reyhouard CSB will pilot, and I shall take the other four in the community car, plus the picnic lunch. If the weather favours us, it should prove both a pleasant and beneficial day. The boys are ready to assist at the ceremony profitably, I think, as we showed them two little films yesterday afternoon, real movies of an ordination ceremony, complete with music, singing, and explanations. They were both twelve minutes long, the first being one on the minor orders up to the subdiaconat and the



July 7, 1959

103

second one one the major orders with the emphasis on the priesthood. They were very interesting and extremely well produced. We are lucky to be near Lyon where films on a great many religious topics can be rented for a few days at a time at a reasonable price.

School closes on Tuesday next. Father Wally Platt will spend one month of the summer in Munich studying German. Retreat will be September 1st to 6th.

Eucharistic Congress to be held in Lyon next week.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
July 7, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks. Acknowledges a letter from Lou and Jean.

Our outing last Monday for the minor seminarians turned out to be a great success. We left the college before six a.m. and arrived at the cathedral at Viviers in good time for the beginning of the ceremony, 8:45 a.m. The kids had excellent seats reserved for them in the nave so they could follow each ordination as it came off - tonsure first, then porter, lector, exorcist, acolyte, subdeacon, none received the diaconate, and lastly the priesthood. The ordinandi were not very numerous: vocations have fallen off some in the diocese and the prolongation of military service due to the war in Algeria also has cut down the number of seminarians. But the ceremony was a long one just the same, from 8:45 a.m. to 12:15. Luckily

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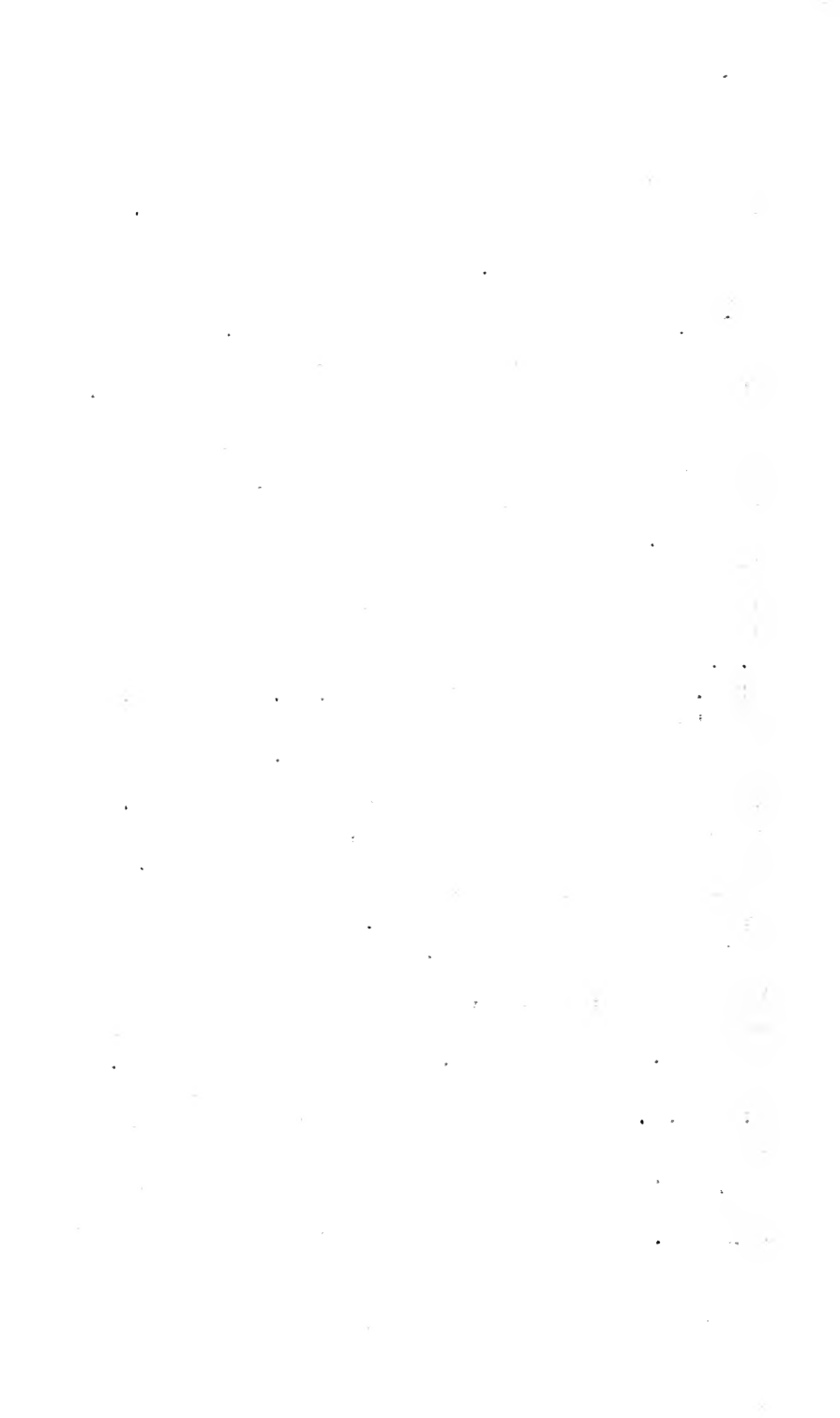
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I had booklets for the lads to follow the prayers, and one of the seminary professors explained things a little from the pulpit. That made the three and a half hours go by a bit more quickly. Afterwards we had a picnic lunch on the seminary farm beside the Rhône, a few miles south of Viviers. One of my former pupils, Jean Billon, who has been in the seminary for two years accompanied us. Just when we had finished eating and had taken some snaps down came the rain in buckets, but it only lasted about five minutes, the sky cleared up again and was fine for the rest of the day. From there we drove a little farther down the river to see the big power dams that the French government has constructed recently, and finally took the road again around 4:00 p.m. in order to be back at the college at 6:30. All went off very well, deo gratias, here's hoping that a few seeds of vocation were either planted or nourished.

The next day was the prize-giving day here. We had class in the morning, followed by the public reading of the examination results. Then the final leave-taking at which a certain number of parents assisted. Since then we have been recuperating.

Sunday last, July 5, I had the privilege of assisting at the National Eucharistic Congress in Lyon. Three of us, Fathers Félix Pouzol, Auguste Marcou and I drove in to the Mass at 9:30 a.m. and stayed for the great procession in the afternoon that brought the Congress to a close. The ceremonies were splendid but the weather was so warm we could hardly keep our balance. I can't remember having felt the sun





July 20, 1959

105

so hot, not even in Madrid. Fortunately none of our group keeled over, but more than one swooned away in the course of the day. The Holy Father broadcast a special message to those who were present at the morning Mass and which we heard very clearly over the Public Address system.

And tomorrow by a stroke of luck, I'll have a ride to Ars, the famous shrine-village of Jean Marie Vianney, the patron of pastors and priests the world over. It is the centenary of his death this year, so I'll remember you all at the foot of his reliquary and in particular Fathers Carroll and Hart. Best to all.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Monday, July 20th, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letters with family news and apologizes for having missed a letter. Tells of rivalry between Father Wally Platt and himself in the matter of nephews and nieces. He is still a few up on me, but ... we're catching up!

Yesterday I said two Masses in a little parish away up in the Cévenne mountains about 30 miles from here, the 7:00 and the 10:00, plus a bit of a sermon and a few confessions. The day was already warm when I left Annonay at 6:30 a.m. but the farther I climbed along the curving mountain road the cooler the air became, until I almost had to put a jacket on upon arriving. It was a beautiful drive up,



around and through wooded hills with all the green scenery that their trees and little meadows had to offer. The people in the parish are all farmers, but most of them live in the village and go out to their farm each day. They have a beautiful church, very old, but done over recently, neat as a pin, with everything in excellent taste. They all answered the prayers with me at the Low Mass at 7:00 and even sang a few hymns on their own at the Offertory, the Communion and again before leaving the church. At ten o'clock the little church was filled again, though with more men present this time who took care of the sung parts of the High Mass, and very well too. It was a great treat for me to see how well they prayed and sang together in that little out-of-the-way parish without a resident parish-priest. It is the neighboring pastor who does what he can for them along with his own parish. The name of the village is Burdignes, not far from Bourg-Argental in the Loire Département.

Well, next Monday (July 27), I shall be setting out for Spain with a stopover in Lourdes for a day and a half. I plan to leave Annonay sometime after supper on my motor-bike (not a motorcycle, but a bike with a motor on it) and make my way down to Valence (in France) in the Rhône Valley about 45 miles from here. At Valence I shall catch the night train shortly after midnight and put the bike in the luggage van, and away the two of us will roll until noon the next day, or rather the same day, when both of us will get oof at Lourdes. After a couple of days in Our Lady's



August 2, 1959

107

great shrine I intend to go on to the Spanish border on the bike, spend a night in San Sebastian or thereabouts, and proceed to Santander the following day. If the bike saddle gets too hard after 150 kilometres or so I'll camp down in some little hotel for another night and arrive in Santander August 1st. My address there will be: Gran Hospedería "La bien aparecida", Rualasal 5, Santander, Spain. I shall be there from August 1 to August 31. Since the retreat here at Annonay begins September 1st, I'll have to make a non-stop trip back.

\* \* \*

Pensión "La Bien Aparecida"  
Rualasal 5, Santander  
August 2, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Hello once again from this world beyond the Pyrenees, where we have the noon meal at 2:00 p.m. and supper anytime after 9:30 p.m.

Account of trip from Annonay to Lourdes, and from Lourdes to Santander.

The director of this Pension is a young diocesan priest, at least he directs the section reserved for the clergy. He welcomed me with open arms, showed me to a very lovely room, as good as one finds in first class hotels and arranged with a nearby garage to keep my motor-bike each night. The meals are excellent and what is important for me, taken in company with other Spanish priests who make me speak only Spanish. The city of Santander, that is, the part lying along the coast is a



August 16, 1959

108

real jewel. I'm not sure if it doesn't surpass all I have seen in Europe for sheer natural beauty. The University is neatly set in the midst of this splendid décor, benefiting from the cool ocean breezes that delight the whole city. What a change from the heat of Madrid two years ago, or even from the intense heat we suffered in France during most of July. I think it's going to be a very pleasant stay. Classes begin tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. Shall write again soon.

\* \* \*

Casa Sacerdotal, Rualasal 5  
Santander, España  
Sunday August 16, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Half of the course is over already, and we're raring to go back at the last lap after a long week-end, both Saturday and today being holidays from lectures and holydays. My return date to France is set for the 30th, so there remain really only 14 days. According to the university calendar we try our exams on the 30th, but I have put in a petition at the Registrar's office to anticipate them by a few days in order to have my diploma before leaving. Should learn some time this week if the permission will be granted.

Account of a swim in the Bay of Biscay.

Acknowledges letter with news from home.

From reports from France, Father Bill Marceau has reached Annonay; he is Father George Beaune's replacement. It will be a big change





August 24, 1959

109

for him as it is for anyone coming from America, but "on s'y habitue". Last night I attended a symphonic concert, the Madrid orchestra directed by Rafael Frühlbeck, 25 years old. And the solo violinist who played Mendelssohn's violin concerto, Agustin Leon Ara, is 23 years old! Both Spaniards and magnificent. Spain can rightly be proud of them. Better close now.

\* \* \*

Casa Sacerdotal, Rualasal 5  
Santander, España  
August 24, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Describes procedures for getting self and motor-bike on Spanish trains. Outlines plans for return to Annonay. Acknowledges letter of August 15th.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Saturday, September 12, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letters from home. Glad the table-cloth and serviettes arrived at their destination.

The supplementary examinations were written this Thursday by those students who didn't quite make the grade in June. We corrected them yesterday and discussed them in a marks meeting this afternoon, some pulling through, others staying put, and a few being obliged to seek out another school. We're all set



now for the opening day. I haven't received my teaching schedule, but rumour has it that a few more hours of Spanish will be my lot, and a few less hours of English.

Thanks to Lou for his faithful monthly letter.

P.S. You mentioned Father John A. Burke, CSB. I know him quite well and am really not surprised that his retreat was wonderful. He is a wonderful confrere.

\* \* \*

Annonay, September 21, 1959

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

The school is buzzing with activity and conversation this afternoon, it's registration day. Parents, students, little brothers and sisters are in all the halls, classrooms and dormitories installing the boys' belongings, signing the proper papers and paying fees (not the least of the activities). I have just spent three hours standing in one of the corridors talking to mothers and fathers, shaking hands, renewing old acquaintances and making new ones; so I decided to call a halt, broke away and came into hiding in my room for a few minutes hoping I shall be able both to get this letter off to you (already a day or two overdue) and finish my breviary.

Classes begin tomorrow with students getting their books at the college bookstore. Then a day and a half of retreat.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*



September 25, 1959

111

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
September 25, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening paragraph sends best wishes to parents on their 51st wedding anniversary, September 29th.

Acknowledges letter of September 15th.

Remarks on coming centennial of the parish church in Lindsay.

School is once again well under way.

No sign of Father Hart at Annonay yet.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, Ardèche.  
Monday, October 5, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter of September 28th.

This morning a letter Special Delivery arrived from Mrs. M. Readman, 578 Hopkins Ave., Peterborough, addressed very exactly to me. While opening it I couldn't for the life of me remember who Mrs. Readman was, though the name seemed to ring a tiny little bell somewhere, just enough to make me sure I should know her. In the letter was a second letter, sealed and addressed to Miss Marcia Readman, c/o Fr. Kevin -- Kindly give this to Marcia when she calls. I can't say that I'm any the wiser, as the name Marcia doesn't recall anything at all. Are they relatives, or friends in Peterborough? I feel awful for not recog-



October 5, 1959

112

nizing the names. I never was much good at recalling people's names, but since coming to France, spending stretches of three years away from all old acquaintances, I have forgotten almost everyone, save the very close and well-known ones. But there's not much I can do about it at the moment. There is really no one here would give me a few leads, so I'll just have to wait until Marcia shows up.

Observations on the renovation of the parish church in Lindsay.

Sorry ot hear Mrs. McIntyre is so poorly.

Wine-harvesting season on in France.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Wednesday, October 21, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks.

As a matter of fact, I have been a bit on the go recently with a vocations campaing that is on this week! but had to be prepared last week - posters, slogans, pictures, and other material that might help to bring this serious problem before the minds of our students. As I have probably told you many times already, I am in charge of what we call the St. Ddominic Savio Club, a group of boys who think they may have a vocation to the priesthood or brotherhood. Each year we recruit new members in the lower grades, what would correspond to Grades 9 and 10 in Ontario schools, a month





or more after the opening of the school year. At the end of a week or ten days of poster campaigning in the study-hall and classrooms, I give a talk to each class separately, explaining what the club is, its aims and activities, and distribute a ballot to each student on which he writes his name and whether the prospect of the priesthodd interests him or not. It is from the results of these ballots that we organize the junior section of the club. Those who persevere in their duties: Mass three times aweek, rosary and visit daily, one meeting a week, etc. for a period of two years proceed to the senior branch, the St. John Bosco Club directed by Father Wally Platt. Apart from these religious obligations, nothing distinguishes these boys from the other students, they have exactly the same schedule each day as the others, eat with them, play with them, etc. In time we hope a certain number of them will go off each year to the diocesan seminary, to the missions, or to some religious order. Only time, prayers and work will tell. So far, though, in the three years the club has existed we have sent three boys to the minor seminary, one to the major and one to the Holy Ghost Fathers Juniorate. That in itself is encouraging.

Acknowledges letter of October 12th. Marcia Readman has written from Salzburg, Austria, that she hoped to be in Annonay on the 16th or 17th. She has not arrived yet.

\* \* \*



October 29, 1959

114

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
October 29, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

First snow on the mountains near Annonay and  
first heat on in the house.

Glad to hear his mother's health has improved.

All Saints holiday lasts five days. Most Bas-  
ilians will be helping out in parishes for  
confessions, etc.

Closing remarks concern a suggestion in the  
overseas edition of the Globe and Mail that  
Canadian agriculture needs large mechanized  
farms, a suggestion he opposes.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
November 4, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter from his mother. Speaks  
of Halloween in Canada and of "blousons noirs"  
in Annonay.

Along with your letter came an invitation from  
Father Carroll to the centennial celebrations  
which I should very much like to accept. The  
programme looks wonderful. But I'm afraid  
you'll all be worn out after it is over. I  
shall be very happy to receive a copy of the  
book that is being published for the occasion.  
It should make a magnificent souvenir.

The further bit of information you included  
about Miss Marica Readman is enlightening.  
Perhaps it explains the fact that I have seen  
nothing of her yet, nor received any word other



November 4, 1959

115

than the one letter send from Salburg almost a month ago. Her mother's letter is still waiting for her here on my desk, and I would gladly forward it if only she gave me some definite address. I guess she's just without one for the moment.

We had Father Stan Kutz with us for a few days, a Basilian studying theology in Munich. He knows Pat Herr and the fmaily quite well, so I told him we had met Mrs. Herr at the Martyrs Shrine last summer and that she was asking for him. He will have another two or three years in Germany before finishing his doctorate.

One of our confreres here, Father Louis Mazet, is celebrating his 60th ordination anniversary this year. He is 85 and though victim of several ailments, still manages to get around. In fact I met him on his way downtown this afternoon, a bit bent but marching along at a great clip. His other contemporary here, Father Antoine Epitalon (84) is not nearly so active. French wines must be good presevatives!

\* \* \*

Saturday, December 5, 1959.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologizes for missing a weekly letter. Acknowledges letters from members of the fmaily.

News of the Fréjus dam catastrophe.

Thursday, December 3, we held our study day for the minor seminarians at Notre Dame d'Ay, as I believe I told you in the last letter. After almost a steady week of rain and cold weather, the day turned out beautifully. We



left after classes in the morning, and ate our packed lunches upon arriving after having prayed at the shrine. An hour and a half of games succeeded the lunch, in which all 21 took part in one or another. Then followed the conference given by Father Félix Pouzol in Father René Robert's absence, this latter being ill. After a question and discussion period, which was shorter than I would have liked, we all went to the chapel for the conferring of the badges, followed immediately by the Mass. By that time it was coming up to 5:00 p.m., so we just had time to have a little bite "le goûter" before taking off homewards. I think the boys enjoyed the outing and profited by the instructions. They are all very proud of their insignia in any case. If it has helped a few to strengthen their vocation, the efforts will not have been expended in vain.

Father Wally Platt has just left a packet of Christmas cards on my desk which makes me think that the great feast is not so very far off after all. More work for George and her Majesty's mail.

Very best to all once again.

\* \* \*

Annonay, December 9, 1959.

Dar Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks. Ask his mother if she could make a small hooked rug for his room.

Saddened by the news of Mrs. Slack's death.

Observations on books mentioned by his mother and suggested reading.





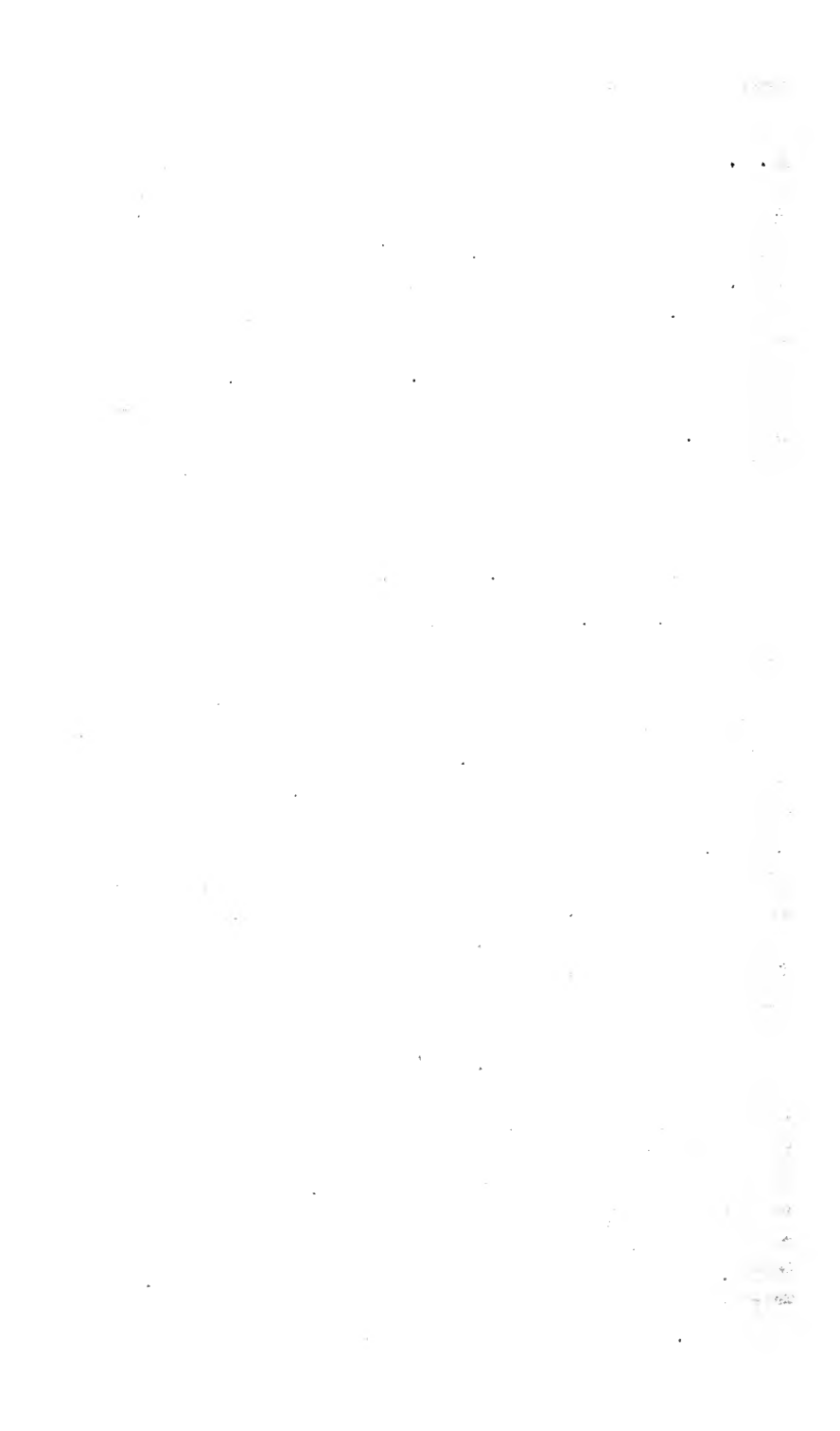
P.S. Father Robert Scollard mentioned recently in a letter that no mention was made of the Basilians by the speaker at the Pontifical High Centennial Mass. Don't tell me who he was, or I might be tempted to seek a terrible revenge. It seems that Father Carroll made up for the unfortunate omission and we are grateful to him for that. After all, Lindsay parish has given three vocations to the Basilians, to say nothing of the help these same have given to the parish many a weekend.

\* \* \*

Annonay, Sunday Dec. 20/59.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Even with jet service it will keep this letter hopping to reach you before Christmas. So I should have had it on its way to you yesterday, and fully intended to, but the day slipped in an hour or two before I expected. At the moment we are correcting the Christmas term exams, by that I mean setting them, presiding over them while they are being written, marking the papers, discussing the marks, and filling out report cards, all with the regular class schedule. The exams are written after class hours over here. It's tough on the boys and on the professors too, but that is the way they seem to like it. I've been plugging for a reform for four years now, but as yet with no positive result. But I intend to keep hammering; the metal will either bend, break or change shape sooner or later. It seems to me at examination time the kids should have no classes, just exams and time to review their work. It would simplify things for us too. But that plan is much too practical to be adopted.



Acknowledges Mass stipend for Aunt Mary Ryan.

Speaks of the annual trip to get greenery for the Christmas cribs.

You have been reading about Our Lady's apparition at La Salette. I had the good fortune to visit the shrine two years ago early in July. We drove from here, leaving early one morning and coming back the same night. As you say, it is in the French Alps, not so very far from Grenoble. The road leading up to the basilica is very steep and tortuous. It was on Mount Obiou, very near there, that the Canadian pilgrims coming from Rome in the Holy Year 1950 crashed to their death. They are buried in a little cemetery that one can easily visit on the way up to the shrine. My professor of Canon Law at the Grand Séminaire de Québec, Monsignor Bureau, was among the victims. The shrine of La Salette is very well known in this part of France, but one can only visit it in fine weather. I don't think it would be possible to drive there now for the snow.

Remarks on the French political scene.

Closes with Christmas greetings.

\* \* \*

Annonay, December 26, 1959.

'Twas the day after Christmas and all thru the house not a creature was stirring, not even a Basilian! Our boys have all gone home, leaving our college once more an ensemble of great, gaunt, silent corridors and rooms. When they are here we spend a good part of our time keeping them quiet and now that they are gone,



we miss the noise! Most of the confreres have come back from helping out with confessions and Masses in the different parishes, but will need a day or two to recuperate. Our weather is unbelievably mild; it doesn't even freeze at night this last while. Christmas day itself was glorious, but just between you and me, I prefer frost and ice and snow at this time of year. However, that is just a detail. The real meaning of the feast is the same the world over.

News of Bernie's recent illness is sad.

Please thank Peter and Mary for Mass stipend.

What a blow to Peterborough diocese with the death of Father Coffey! He couldn't have been very old. And who will replace him? Vocations seem to be so scarce. I was also very shocked by the news of Bishop McDonald's death. He is young too for a bishop!.

Father René Robert is all over his flu and thanks you sincerely for your good wishes. He was thrilled with George and Anne's card and their thoughtfulness in adding a note and gift of money. He came running up to my room to show me the letter, and to solicit my collaboration in an immediate reply. I simply acted as translator.

Acknowledges Christmas cards from family.

My parish work took place in St. Julien-Molin-Molette, the same little place with the big name. After confessions Christmas Eve (eight and a half hours) I sang the Midnight Mass and then said a Low Mass immediately after (for you and Dad, Mom) and celebrated my third Mass



December 30, 1959

120

at 9:30 a.m. The curé came down to the college in his Dauphine to pick me up and brought me back again Christmas Day after Vespers. Great crowds turned out and we gave out a wonderful lot of Communion which is by far the most consoling part of any great feast for the priest.

Closing remarks.

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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
December 30, 1959.

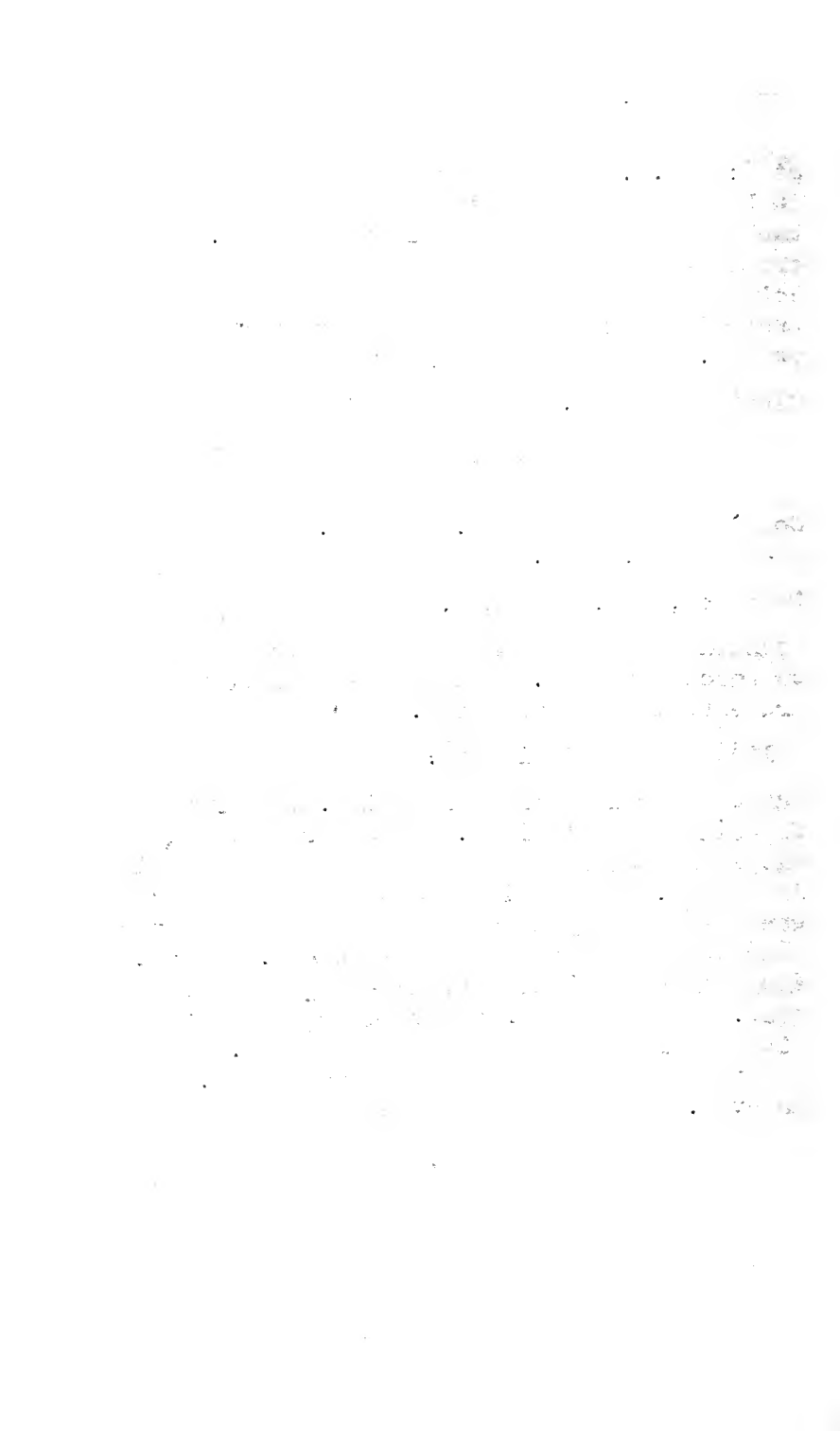
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges Christmas package which arrived on December 28th. Father Wally Platt was present at the unwrapping.

Holidays are slipping by.

Our weather is still quite mild, far from freezing even at night. There are lots of excellent mushrooms in the woods even at this late date. Just this afternoon three of us went off hunting them and came back about an hour ago with seven or eight pounds. We eat them in egg omelettes or in the gravy with meat. The sisters who have charge of the kitchen are experts at preparing them. Once again sincere thanks for the lovely box,  
As ever.

\* \* \*





January 6, 1960

121

Annonay, January 6, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks concern the feast of the Epiphany.

Acknowledges Christmas letter with gift of \$10. Describes Christmas cribs at Annonay.

Classes are in fullswing again.

This afternoon we killed two pigs, both of them weighing about 225 lbs each. I say "we", but in fact it was the farmer Régis, with a bit of help from the two gardners, the carpenter and one of the other maintenance men. They did the actual butchering, so I am told, but a man from the town, a professional cold-meats dealer, is doing the rest, that is, putting every last particle of the pigs to the best possible use. Not an ounce is lost or thrown away. It's really an education to see how thrifty they can be. Most of the expensive cuts correspond pretty well to what I used to see and taste in Cada, but the rest of the pig goes into salami or pâté, is dried and eaten several months later cold with bread and butter usually for breakfast. Once one has acquired a taste for it I find it is delicious. It is what they call over here "saucisson", but is not to be translated by sausage for it is not all the same thing.

Once again thanks for all your good wishes; my prayers as always.

\* \* \*



January 12, 1960

122

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Tuesday, January 12, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks deal with Bernard's recovery from illness and Joe and Jean's engagement. Asks for Bernard's address.

Since last writing Old Man Winter has swooped down on us from the north of Scandinavia, sending our temperatures down to points that would be considered lovely winter weather in Canada, but which make the people's teeth chatter here. We have a tiny covering of snow, swept away by the wind in many places, but not melting away for the moment. Our house is comfortably heated, that is our rooms and class-rooms, but there is no heat in the corridors which makes for a strange situation as you can imagine. The doors opening up onto the playing yards, and there is a yard on all four sides, are difficult to shut, even when one takes the trouble, with the result that they stay pretty well open. We throw on an extra coat and a scarf before going down to the ground floor.

Few French boys in Annonay learn to skate because weather does not permit an outdoor rink.

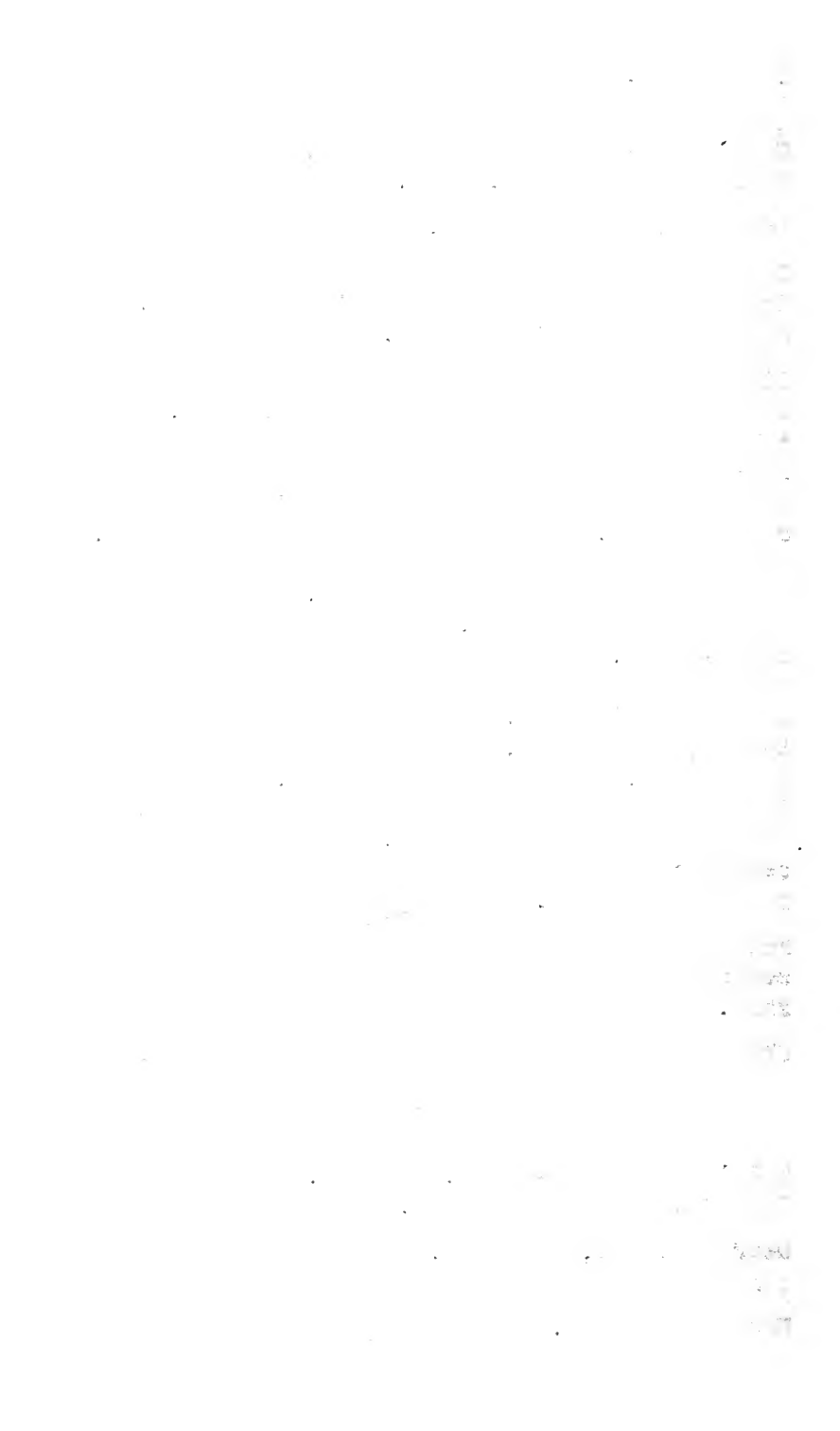
Observations on the French political scene.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Tuesday, January 19, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter of January 11th and six Mass intentions.



January 19, 1960

123

Another change in curates at Lindsay parish.

Observations on weather in Annonay and ability of French children to stand the cold.

Remarks on the Church Unity Octave.

In a letter from Father Robert Scollard we learn that one of the general councillors, Father Vincent Kennedy, has been down to Mexico City with the director of Mexican Missions, Father John Collins. Does that mean a new foundation down there? It's possible. We like to conjecture anyway.

P.S. Just remembered Dad's birthday tomorrow.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Monday, January 25, 1960.

Dear Mom, and Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks deal with the warmer weather that has come to Annonay.

Observations on the crisis in Algeria.

One of our conferes here had a narrow escape yesterday in the car. He had gone down to see his father in the central Ardèche, about fifty miles south, who has been ill for some time. In the course of the afternoon he took his mother out for a little drive in the car. It was raining and windy. All of a sudden he heard a noise in the back of the car like a part of the fender that had worked loose and was falpping in the wind. He turned around to see what it was, lost control of the car which was only going about 25 miles per hour, went over the edge and down into a field about six feet below. The car turned right over and



lay on its side. He wasn't hurt, but his mother received a severe cut on the forehead. He had a time to get her out of the car, but once out both of them walked to the nearest village for medical care. They were shocked up a bit, as one can well imagine, but not seriously injured. The car, of course, is almost unrecognizable, though I think the motor is still intact. They were very lucky indeed, for there might have been another car coming just at that moment, or a tree somewhere in their path. It's doubtful if the insurance will help us any as the accident was certainly the driver's fault.

We expected to have Father John Warren with us tonight and for a few days. He is an RCAF chaplain, Basilian and one of my former teachers when I was a student in Grade XIII at St. Mike's. He is stationed at Metz, which is a fair distance from Annonay, something Toronto - Montreal. But we received word today that he has not been able to find a replacement for the time it would take to drive down, visits a day and drive back. They are very short of chaplains at the base where he is, especially English-speaking ones. He knew Nora Kirley quite well, and always asks me news of her whenever I see him. Apparently she nursed him once in St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto, when he had an operation.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*





January 30, 1960

125

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Saturday, 6 pm, January 30, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks debate the merits of a hand-written and a typed letter.

Acknowledges letter of January 23 with Mass intentions for Mrs. Millen.

Anticipates the rug made by his mother.  
Closes with observations on French politics.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur,  
Annonay, February 4, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges receipt of the rug with beaver and gree maple leaf emblems. Much admired by visitors to his room.

Algerian crisis has been resolved for the moment.

Mid term examinations are coming up.

Observations on the current weather in Annonay.

P.S. One of his pupils, Gérard Clément, has written to Michael Kirley and hopes he will be a pen pal.

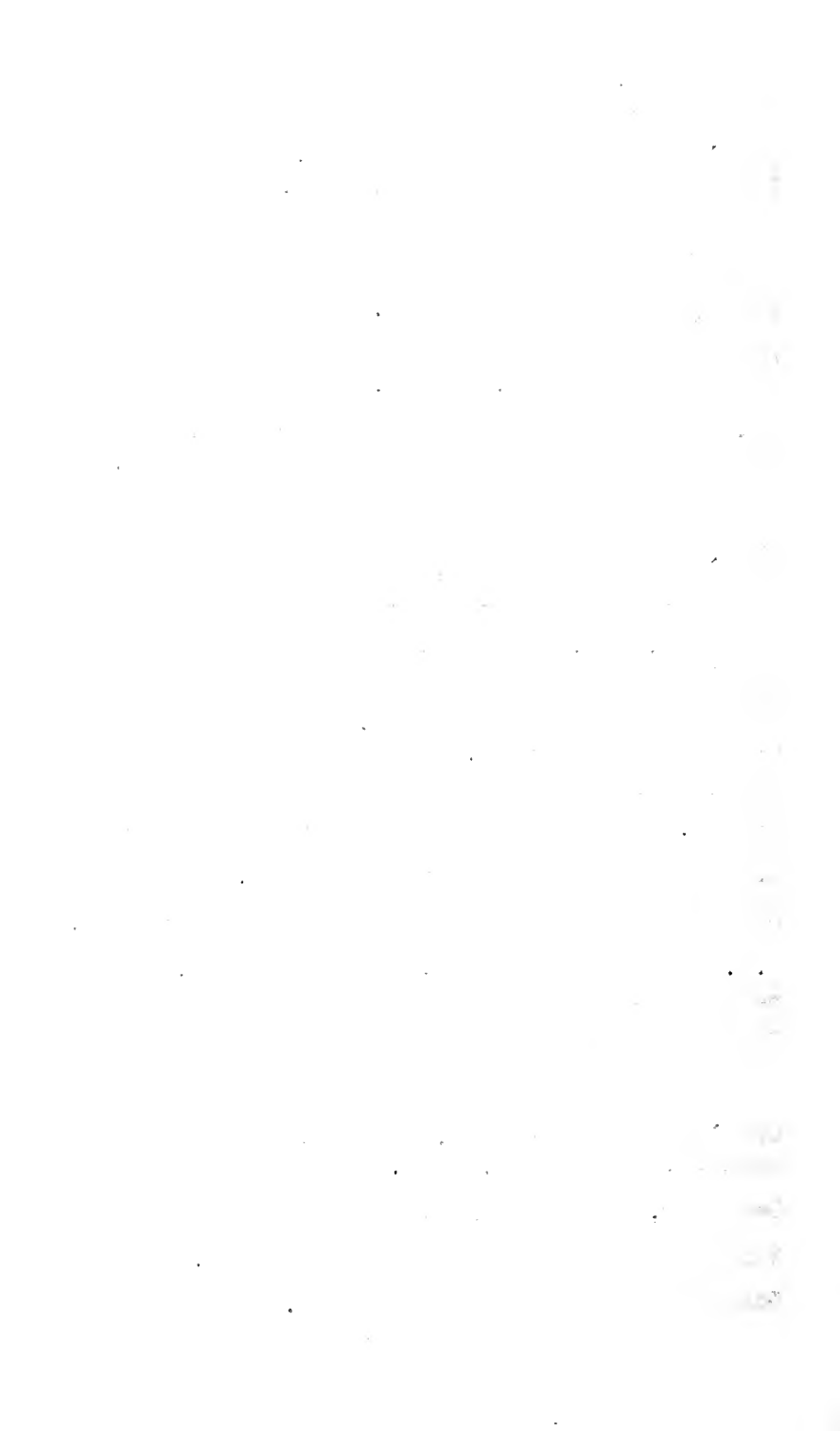
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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Tuesday, February 9, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Sends birthday greetings to his mother.

Observations on weather in Canda.



February 17, 1960

126

Acknowledges letter of February 5th with Mass intentions.

Had to break the news to a boy in his Spanish class, Régis Bert, that his father had dropped dead.

Rug continues to attract attention.

Is in the midst of mid-term English papers.

P.S. Anne tells me you purchased a centennial volume for me and that it is on its way.

Sincere thanks. I shall be most interested in pouring over its contents.

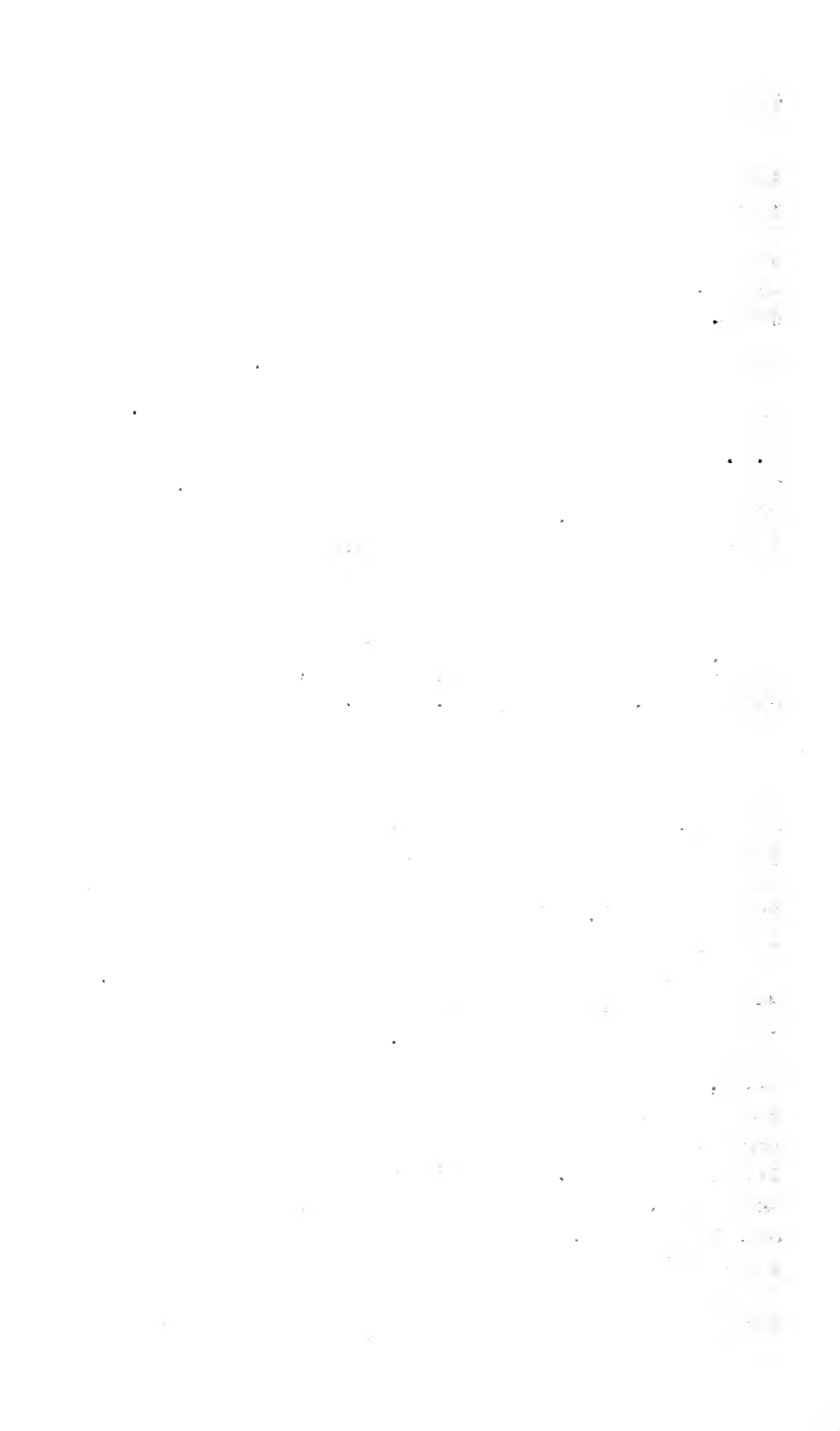
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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Wednesday, February 17, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Peace reigns once more in the house - our boys have all gone home for a long week-end: Wednesday to Monday morning. This break in the second term usually takes place at Mardi Gras, but the Dept. of Education decided to fix it for the middle of February once and for all, that is, as long as the Fifth Republic lasts. In any case, we are just as happy to welcome a respite as the students.

Well, the wonderful centennial volume arrived, and what a magnificent piece of work it is! Hats off to everyone responsible and sincere congratulations. I can't tell you how proud I am of it, and by that very fact, proud of my native parish. What with classes and so forth, I haven't yet had the time to dig out all its treasures, but I can already see it contains a wealth of precious data and interesting obser-



ventions. The first few times through it were more or less given to the photos, which are excellent, by the way. It was like going on a rapid and delightful visit of the whole parish. I kept running across familiar faces and came close time and again to shouting out, "Well for heaven's sake, how are you?" Thanks so much for sending it. You have provided me with an intimate souvenir that I shall carefully guard and cherish for the rest of my days. Soon I hope to send Kink a line of heartfelt felicitations, once I have examined it more thoroughly, as I see she was a major factor in its compilation.

Anecdote about a sliver in a broken board catching part of the yarm that formed the tail of the beaver on his rug and making it vanish. Damage has been repaired.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Tuesday, February 23, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks.

Our little holiday slipped by with customary vacation velocity leaving us Monday morning back in front of the boys and leaving the boys once again seated in front of us. The long week-end did us all good though; we can carry on now with renewed vigour until Easter Sunday. Father Wally Platt and I did a mite of mountain climbing on one of the hills that overlook Annonay, le Mont Miandon, and what do you think we came upon half way up? May



flowers and violets in full bloom! That will give you some idea of the weather we have been enjoying recently. And yet we can see the snow on the higher slopes farther away. An extraordinary winter to be sure.

Is still reading the centennial volume of Lindsay parish.

Observations on the enthusiasm of the French over a royal birth in England.

Today in class I was once again reminded of the importance of prepositions in English, and of the great difficulty they present to foreigners. We wrote this sentence on the board: "When the teacher comes ---- the classroom, we must get ----", and the pupils had to supply the missing prepositions, "into" and "up". But the first lad I called on gave me this slightly different versions: "When the teacher comes at the classroom, we must get out". Can't you just see the terrible professor charging down like a mad Mexican bull and the kids fleeing for their very lives out the windows?

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Thursday, March 3, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Missed a letter in part due to a common house cold.

Annonay is enjoying a warm spell.

Acknowledges letter with Mass intentions.

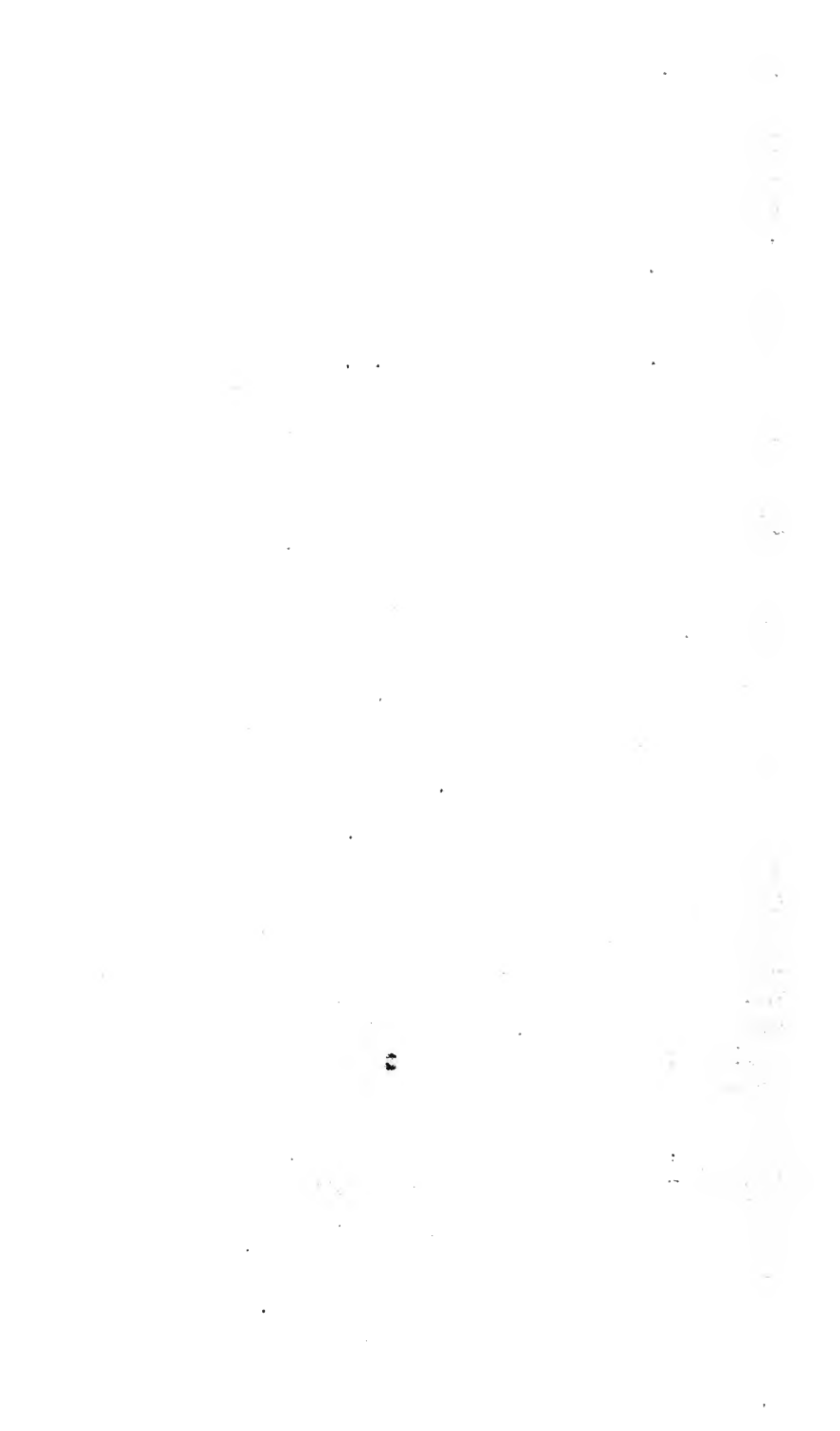




Glad to hear you met Father Gary Poupore. I'm not surprised that he charmed you all. He has a wonderful personality, and is an expert conversationalist. We have had many a long chat together. With his quiet way he doesn't strike you as being a holder of the DFC (I think that is his award) for heroism over Germany in the last war. He is also an M.A. in History from the University of Toronto and may even be close to his doctorate now. I'm sure his lectures or tutorials must be intensely interesting as his approach to history is not at all a text-book one, but rather over the back fence discussion as it were. He is much more interested in what a person is like, how he talks, thinks and acts, than in dates or places. I hope you will have the occasion to meet him again, and no doubt he hopes to be able to come back some day. Being kindly received into someone's home in a parish that one doesn't know very well is a powerful act of charity, believe me.

A terrible tragedy in Agadir.

Speaking of peace and quiet, last evening during the late study period 115 boys in each of the two study halls were working away more or less industriously, when all at once out went the lights! (not a rare occurrence in this old house by the way). Though one could see nothing, let me tell you the scene was quickly transformed from one of comparative tranquillity to another of sheer chaos - desk tops banging, shouts shrill and sharp, punches landed - everything went. When the electricity came back on it was obvious we had suffered our own four or five minute cyclone. Father Bill Marceau and Father Jean Roure were the poor studyhall masters at the time.



March 12, 1960

130

Annonay, Saturday, March 12, 1960.

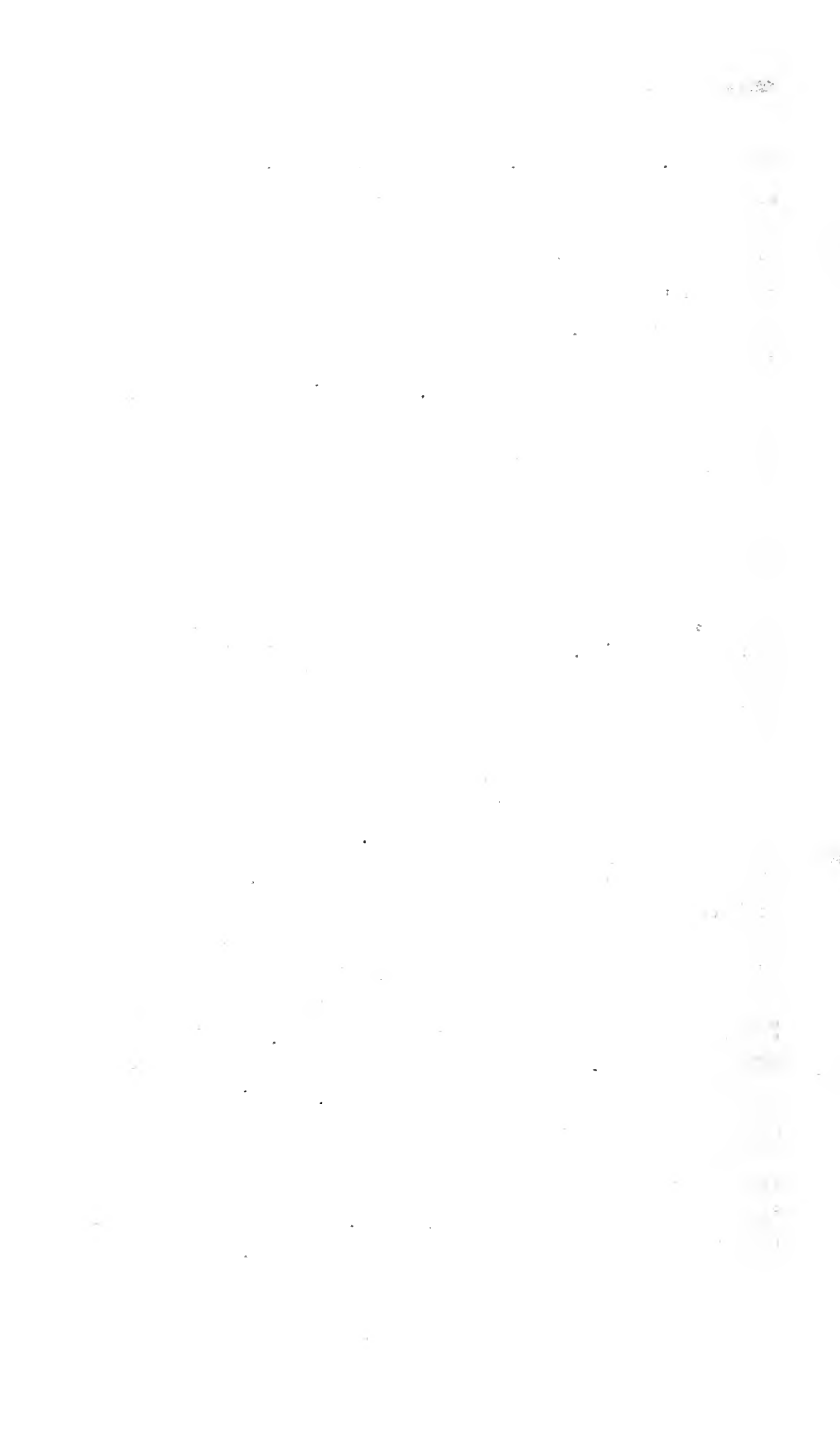
Dear Folks,

Ring the bells, Shout halleluia!

You can't imagine the news I have the pleasure of announcing. Something quite unexpected has turned up since the last letter, which I hasten to let you in on. Here's the story.

You may or may not have know that 1960 is the year in our Community for another General Chapter, the last one having taken place in 1954 and Chapters being every six years. The General Chapter is a reunion of all the Superiors of the Community plus one delegate per house, and holds its sessions in Toronto at St. Michael's. The delegate is elected by the confreres in each house, and who do you think they elected from this one? Need I name him? Not that you would take it for granted that they would elect me, but I imagine from the opening lines of the letter you suspect that the delegate is yours truly. And you are right.

The elections took place this afternoon at 4:30, and it is now a little after five, so you see I am not losing any time in communicating the good news to you. You can't imagine how happy I am to tell you this, as I had not figured on seeing you this summer, having been over in 1958. Normally I would not receive holidays in Canada before 1961. It's true my purpose in coming over will not be for holidays strictly speaking, but when the Chapter sessions are over we shall surely be able to spend a few delightful days together, all the more delightful as we had not figured on it.



March 12, 1960

131

The Chapter is due to open June 13th, so I shall probably arrive Saturday, June 11th or thereabouts. The dates for my departure and arrival have not been fixed yet (we haven't had time), but I shall let you know for sure once a decision is reached. I shall go directly to Toronto and stay there until the Chapter is finished, which date is impossible to know. I doubt if it will last much more than two weeks, however. So ... somewhere in July ... be prepared to set an extra plate and dust off the old piano keys.

I'm afraid I won't be able to come this time with my trunk, which would mean the end of my stay in France. The Superior General judges that my presence here at Annonay is still useful for another while, but that is another question which we shall talk over at our leisure later on this summer.

The confreres have shown extraordinary kindness in giving me the opportunity of going to Canada for the Chapter. They could very well have voted in sufficient number for Father Wally Platt. But since he is due to go for holidays anyway this year, they figured that they could do me a good turn at the same time. I'm also of course aware of the confidence they have placed in me in electing me as their representative, a confidence that I shall surely try to respect and satisfy. Father Charles Roume will also be going to the Chapter, since he is a former Superior General; and Father René Robert, the present Superior here, should also go according to the constitutions. But being at the same time director of studies, and the date of the Chapter falling when it does, in the midst of the baccalaureat exams over here,



March 28, 1960

132

it is quite possible that he will ask to be excused. We're doing our best to persuade him to go if even for a few days only, but it is not sure that we will succeed.

Closing remarks.

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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.

March 28, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

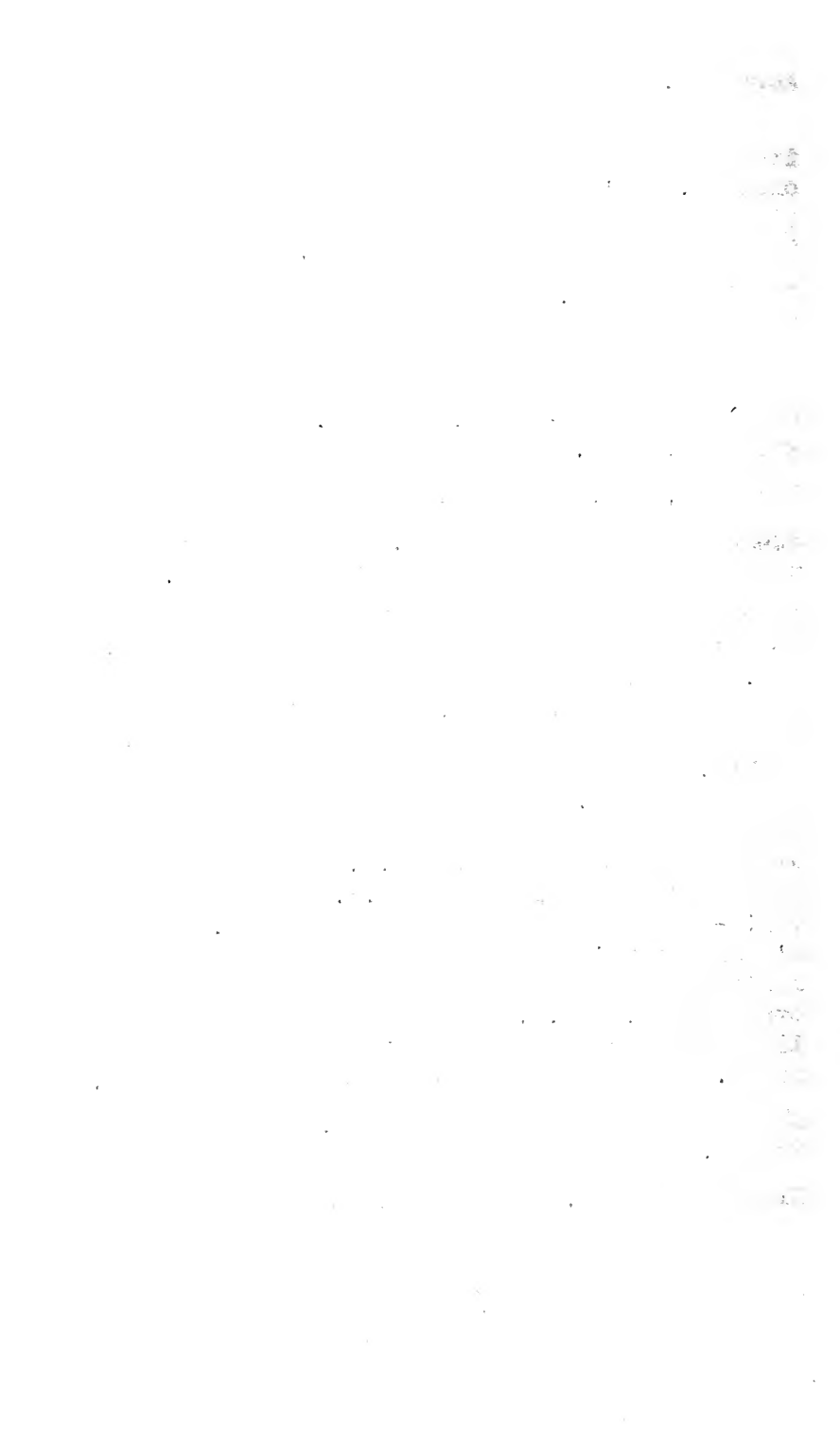
Apologizes for late letter. Acknowledges three letters from home and Mass stipends.

As yet we have no word whether Father René Robert will be exempted from the General Chapter. The decision must come from Father George Flahiff and his council. It will certainly be a much more pleasant trip if we can go together, but neither of us is counting on it for the moment. Our travel agency has booked a seat for me on an Air France jet for Friday afternoon June 10 at 5:30 p.m. (which would get me to Montreal at 8:20 p.m. the same evening! - not quite eight hours of flight. But I'm afraid we'll have to change it to the following day as my classes on Friday are not over till 4:30 p.m. Perhaps another aire line could accommodate me later on the same night. Shall let you know when it is definite.

Observations on the visit of Mr. Krushev to France.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*





April 10, 1960

133

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay  
Sunday, April 10, 1960.

Dear Kink,

Extends congratulations on the St. Mary's Centennial book praising the cover, the arrangement of the articles, printing, paper, and balance between text and photographs.

We are on holidays now and enjoying perfectly wonderful weather. Last week I spent from Wednesday to Saturday down at our summer house at St. Alban-sous-Sampzon with a few of the other confreres. It was a great rest, and timely restoration period before taking on the Easter ceremonies, particularly the confessions. It's always a bit of a heavy session, as all sorts of people turn out whom one has not seen since the previous Easter or Christmas. I suppose there are a number of them in every parish the world over, but French curés seem to have more than their share.

Word came through this past week from Father George Flahiff that Father René Robert is to assist at the Chapter. There was a possibility that he would not go as his work here in June is very heavy and very important, being Prefect of Studies as well as Superior. But the General Council seem to have judged that more is to be gained for the Community by his presence in Toronto, at least for a week or ten days, than his absence. So we shall leave together (and arrive together, I hope!). Our latest reservations are the following: a) Leave Paris Friday, June 10 at 1 p.m. b) Arrive in New York 4 p.m. (8 hours to cross in a Boeing jet Air France). c) Leave New York 6:15 p.m. the same afternoon and d) arrive at Malton 8:05 p.m.



April 19, 1960

134

Leaving Paris Friday afternoon and setting down at Toronto Friday evening at 8:05 is a far cry from five or six days on the boat, isn't it? And it isn't so much more expensive. We'll have two days to meet the other delegates and hold a few pre-summit conferences with those who speak French before going to work officially Monday morning June 13. I must confess I don't know much about chapters, nor does Father Robert, but it seems their deliberations are frightfully secret and all very serious by reason of their importance. It will be interesting at any rate for Father Charles Roume, ex Superior General, also has the right to take part. He is crossing by boat, and will therefore leave earlier than we do, around May 30. We cannot get away before June 16 by reason of our classes, even at that someone will have to fill in for us right up to June 29, the day school is out over here.

Closing remarks include the information that he will return to France on August 26th.

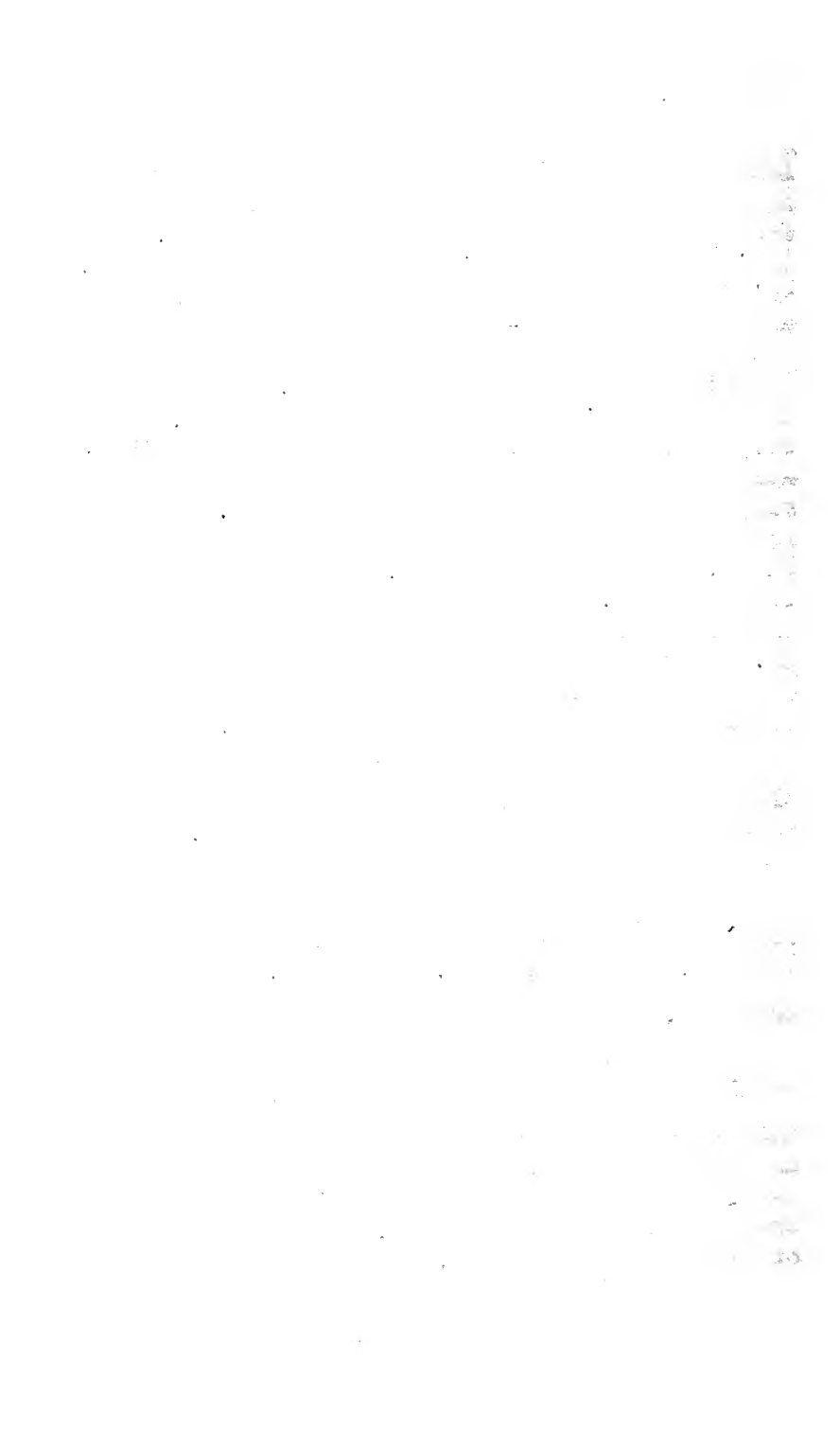
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Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
Tuesday, April 19, 1960. 5:00 p.m.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

School is re-opening after East recess. Acknowledges letter and Mass stipend.

Easter work was rather varied for me this year and not too heavy. For Holy Saturday, I found myself in a little parish lost in the hills, that has no resident priest, but a good number of practicing Catholics. For the afternoon



April 19, 1960

135

and the following morning, Easter Sunday, I was parish priest - a few hours of confessions, not more than four or five which is pretty light for Easter, two Masses Sunday morning with a little sermon, Vespers in the afternoon. The site of the little village is delightful, Vaudevant it is called, but our weather was wretched, just wretched: wind, rain and wet snow. That didn't stop the better part of the parish from being at the seven o'clock Mass, having come on foot, and the rest at ten thirty. Two very kind and hard-working Sisters, who take care of the parish school, provided my meals in their little convent, and what a quaint old fashioned convent - my head almost touched the rough sleepers that held up the ceiling. Everything tidy and neat as a pin, but centuries old. No one lives in the priest's house, but one room is kept nicely furnished for an occasional priest helping out. At night everything is so deathly silent. I found myself afraid to turn over in bed for fear of disturbing the whole house, nothing was to be heard anywhere, absolutely nothing, except the wind, rain and snow on the tile roof. It was a wonderful experience in solitude, but I was more than happy to get back to the Community later on Sunday evening.

Closing remarks.

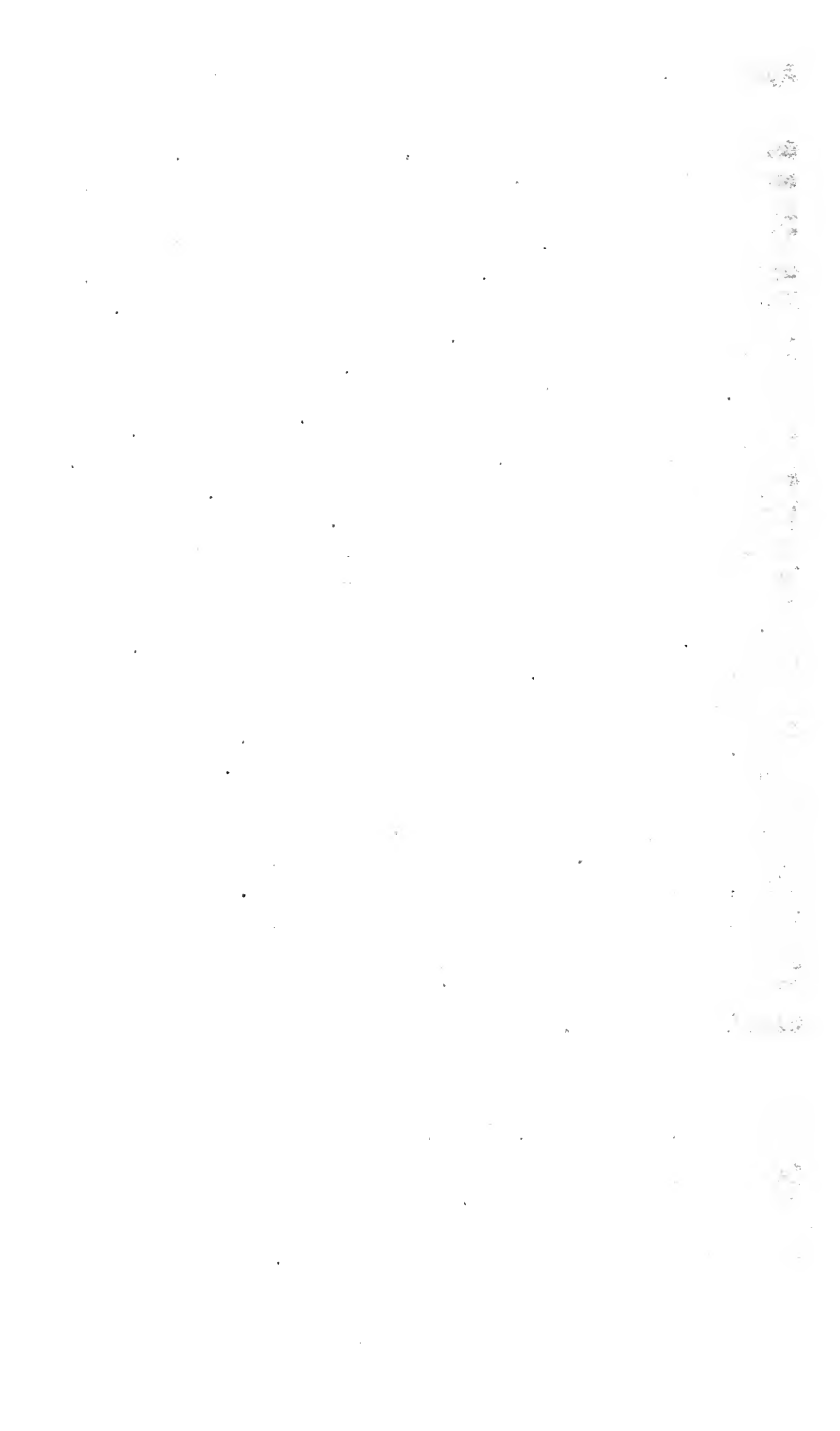
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Saturday, April 23, 1960.

Dear Mom:

Letter sends a signed Mass card that was not included a a packaged sent earlier.

\* \* \*



April 28, 1960

136

Collège du Sacré-Cœur, Annonay.

April 28, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks on weather in Canada and in France.

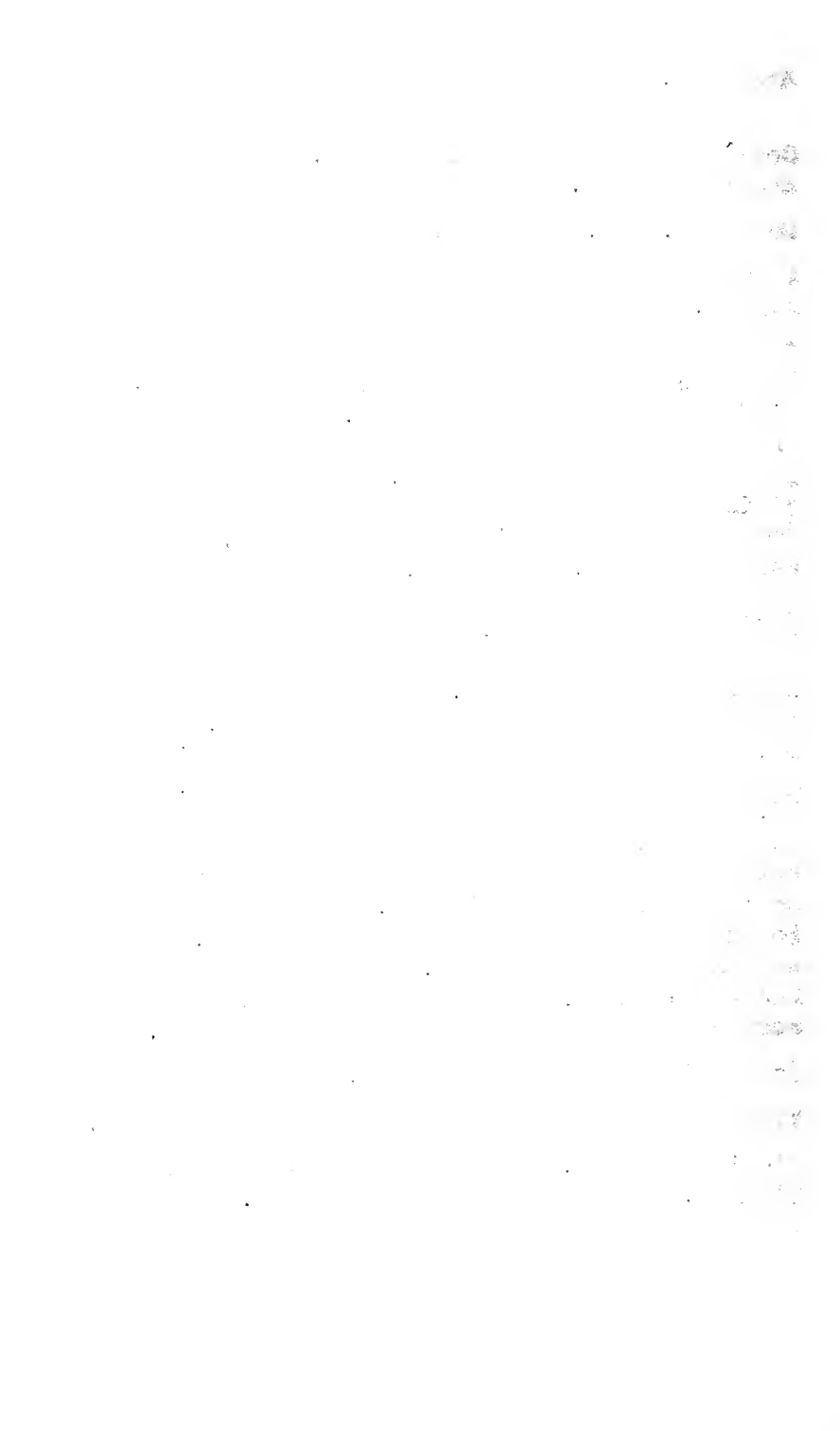
I am in the midst of a considerable pile of correspondence at the moment, all in connection with the General Chapter. Being so far from the other Basilian centres, we have a good deal of writing to do. From letters coming in we are beginning to realize that a long list of items is to be discussed. It would be ideal, of course, if all the capitulants could spend a week or ten days together before going to work, but some like ourselves cannot leave their respective posts until nearly the last minute. Father René Robert and I shall be arriving Friday evening, June 10, and I can see already that there won't be many free moments before the opening day, June 13. A lot of spade work will be done Saturday and Sunday, to say nothing of the lobbying between sessions once the Superior General and General Council are elected. Could I ask you to put the Chapter in your good prayers, If I have not already done so, so that the Holy Ghost will inspire all its decisions, so important for the future of the Congregation.

School is under way once more.

Visit of De Gaulle to Canada and United States.

Closing remarks. Letter from Paul Kirley, Niagara, ask for stamps for the cubs.

\* \* \*





May 6, 1960

137

Collège du-Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, May 6, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

A short letter listing Mass stipends sent and indicating that one letter may have gone astray. Assures mother the Masses will be said.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, Ardèche, May 16, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks apologize for not sending a longer letter as promised.

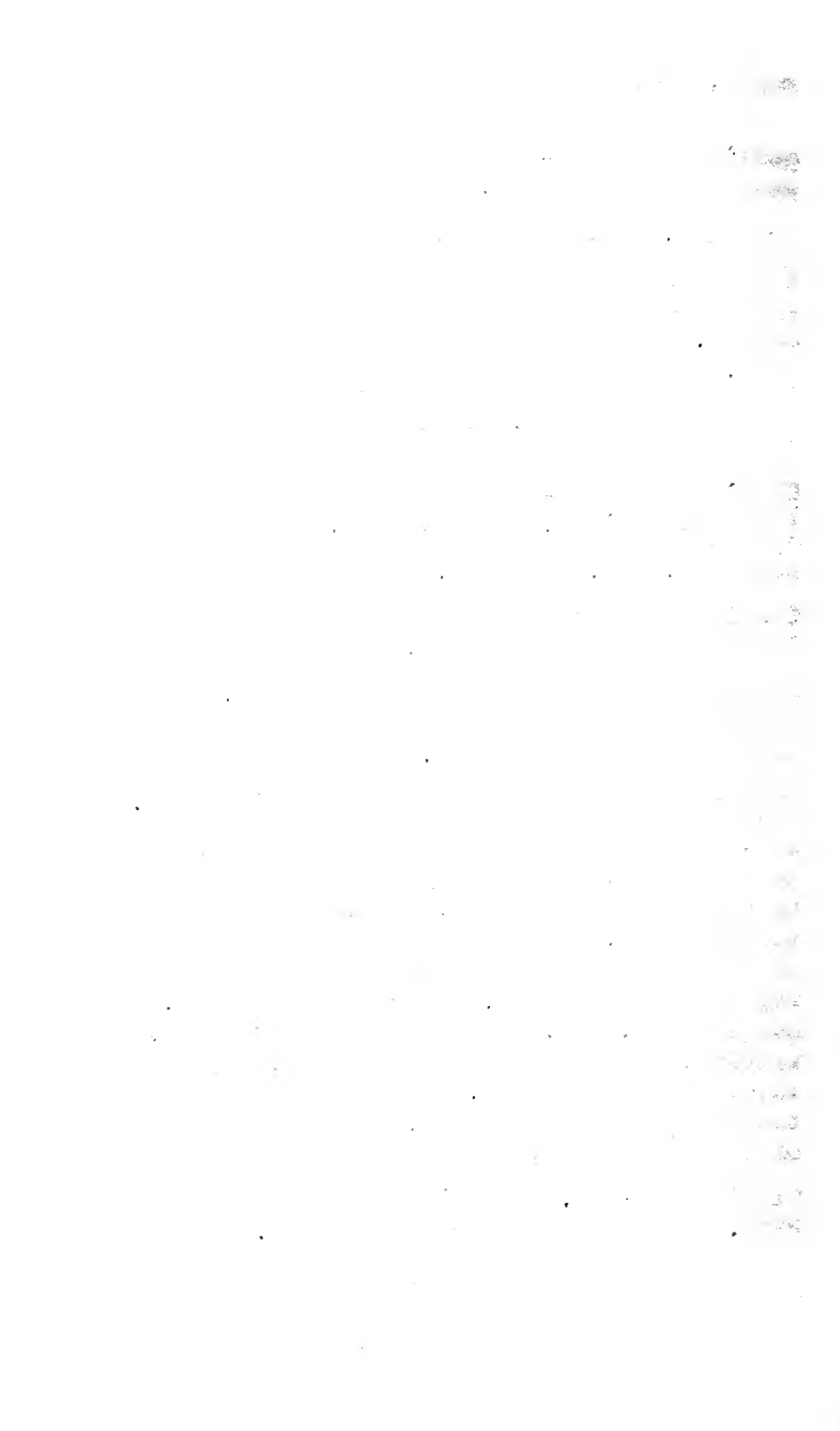
Observations on the weather in France. On an outing with Father Wally Platt he noticed grass burnt during a dry spell.

Remarks on the Big Four Conference in Paris.

In the meantime our own summit conference is taking shape. The Secretary General has sent us considerable resumé's, outlines and brochures to mull over, all of which we'll be discussed at the Chapter and the delegates are corresponding among themselves, exchanging opinions, suggestions, etc. It makes for a lot of letter writing, but answers come back too, which are intensely interesting. I hope you will keep the thing in your prayers, as we need the help of the Holy Ghost.

Closing remarks. "La Fête des Mamans" is May 29th. Sends his mother best wishes.

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May 30, 1960

138

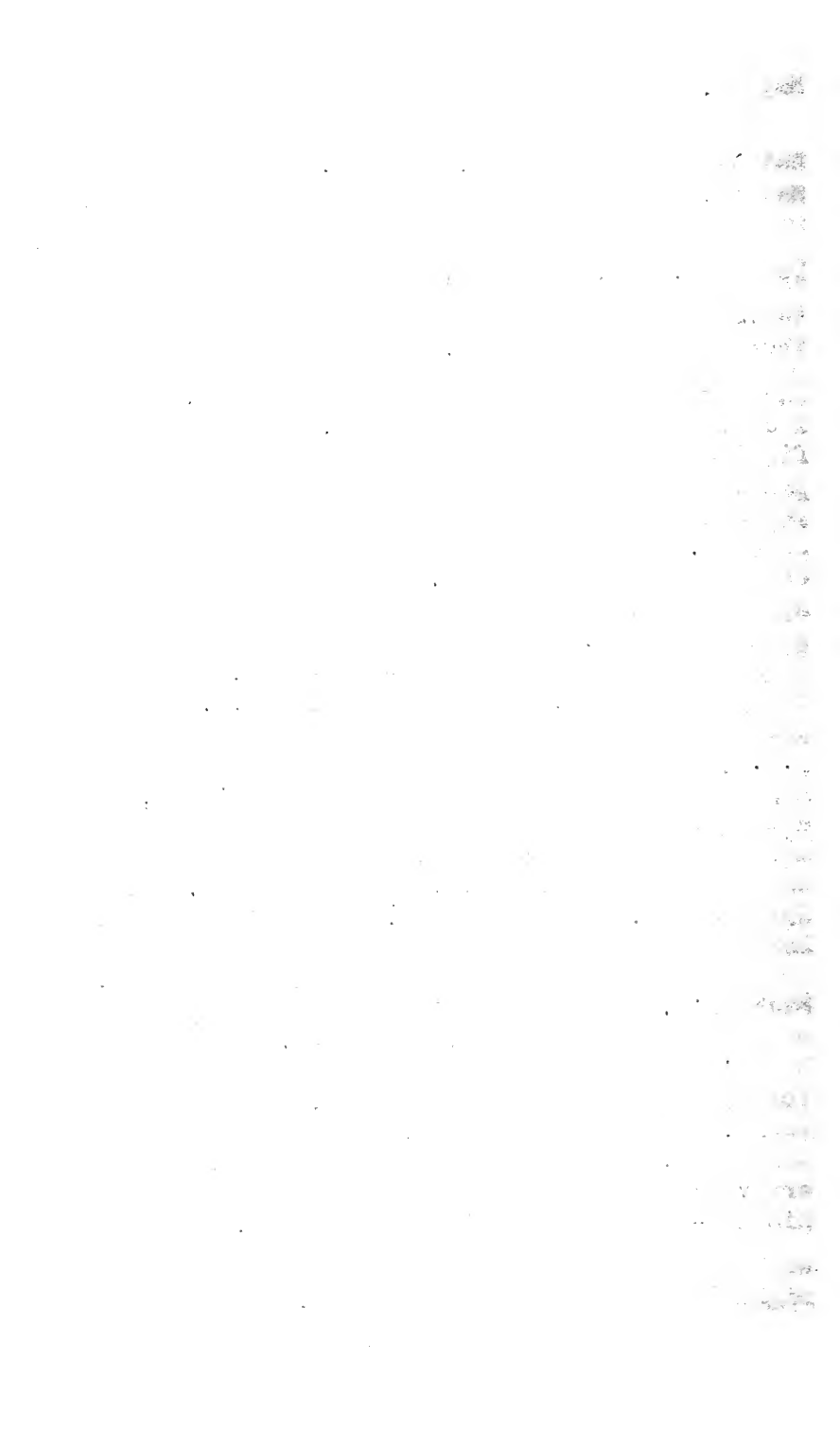
Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay.  
May 30, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologizes for overdue letter and asserts that his health is good.

The work has multiplied somewhat of late, as I carry on with regular classes, pass premature final exams in each and try to keep up with the printed documents that keep arriving from Toronto exposing the agenda of the coming Chapter. But things will simplify themselves considerably before long; June 9th is fast approaching, the day Father René Robert and I go up to Paris. We plan to spend the night there at our usual stopping-over-place, and board the plane Friday, June 10th at 1:00 p.m. If all goes well we'll set down in New York at 3:00 p.m. (Friday) and after a three and a quarter hour wait (seems a long interval doesn't it, after such a rapid crossing) we are to board another plane at 6:15 p.m. that should bring us to Malton at 8:05 p.m. Friday evening. Father Jack Madden, Superior of St. Michael's College, has assured us that a car will be waiting for us to complete the trip from the airport to St. Michael's. And there we'll be for the opening chapter session, Monday, June 13th. Our tickets haven't as yet reached us, but are promised for the latter part of this week. Father Charles Roume, ex-Superior General, leaves Tuesday of this week. He is crossing by boat and should arrive in Toronto about June 7th, time to lose his sea-legs before going to the urns.

We had the Bishop of the diocese with us last night (Saturday) and this morning. He spoke to



May 30, 1960

139

the student body yesterday afternoon and presided at the Solemn Communion exercises this morning. As I may have already mentioned, each year a group of boys, upon reaching twelve years of age, receive Holy Communion in a very solemn ceremony, renew their baptismal vows and profession of faith, and consecrate themselves to Our Lady. The parents come in fine array to assist at the Mass, and of course, hold a big banquet the same day in the boy's honour. In the parishes the girls also take part. In some of the bigger cities and dechristianized areas, this ceremony is a kind of graduation from religious instruction and alas! even practice. But in our area the faith is stronger, the family life somewhat better. The Solemn Communion marks an important stage in the boy's life, but is a beginning of a more active apostolate, rather than a final period to his religious exercises. The Bishop spoke at the Mass, in crozier and mitre, with words levelled more at the parents than at the boys, as is the custom. He stayed for dinner, which just among ourselves was a magnificent banquet - remind me to give you the menu when we get together, and pulled away with his chauffeur at 2:00 p.m. We probably won't see him again until next year.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*

Collège du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
Sunday, August 28, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Arrives safely in Paris and then Annonay.

The bus ride to Toronto Friday morning was very pleasant. He drove straight down Bay Street and



August 28, 1960

140

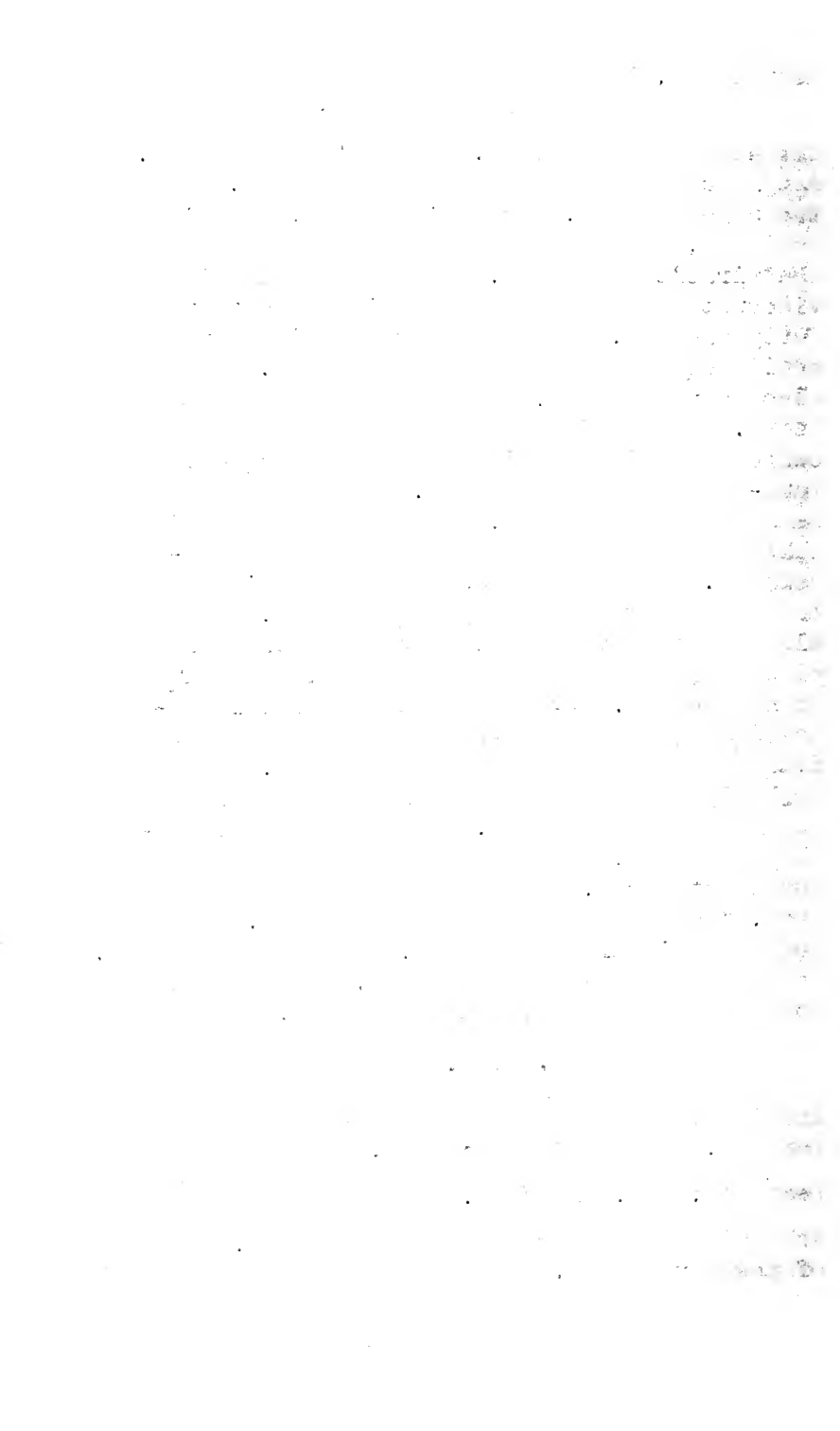
let me off right at St. Michael's front door. A taxi could scarcely have done better. After the adieux at St. Michael's and St. Basil's Seminary, Father Arthur Waligore drove me to the airport at Malton. A Trans Canada Airways Viscount took us to New York in an hour and forty minutes. It was a lovely trip as we could see the land below all the way. They also served a tasty fish dinner piping hot on board. We had just time to clear through customs and immigration before the scheduled take-off of our Boeing 709. But in actual fact we had plenty of time, as the big jet didn't take off until two hours after the hour announced. Two of its four motors didn't seem to be warming up the way they should, so we all had to leave the plane once settled in our places and wait for further word in the Air France lounge. Everyone seemed a little annoyed and uneasy but thankful the trouble was discovered before we were in the air. It was probably only a minor ailment but the crew are wonderfully meticulous. In any case, it finally took off, and purred like a top until we landed at Paris. I at once took a train to Lyon, and a bus from there to Annonay. My tooth didn't kick up at all, nor did my stomach. So you see it was a bon voyage. Shall write you at greater length in a few days.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 12 septembre 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letters and Mass stipends, Review  
of news from home.





September 12, 1960

141

Discusses Mass stipends in light of the increase of Canadian stipends from \$1.00 to \$2.00 and of the Bishop's direction that one dollar Mass stipends were not to be refused.

Last week we made our retreat, from Monday to Friday night, preached by Canon Rochingneux of Lyon. He was an excellent retreat master, very holy and profound but capable of genuine humour at the same time. We all liked him very much.

Father Charles Principe has arrived bag and baggage to replace Father Wally Platt, who as you remember was elected Procurator General and will henceforth reside in Rome. Father Principe is from Rochester, as is Father William Marceau, also on our staff here. Nearly all the professors are back from holidays, parishes, camps, etc. ready to begin another school year. Our enrollment goes up slightly, hence a few classes with extra desks, but we are still far from comparing with some of these big schools where 1000 students and over is the regular number. 250 is our maximum.

Has made an appointment with a dentist for next week.

Glad hear of good threshing weather.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 28 septembre 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Sends best wishes for his parents 52nd wedding anniversary.

Apologizes for missing letter due to opening of the school year.

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September 28, 1960

142

Glad to hear that Lou and Jean have a ~~new~~ boy, making 13 boys to 9 girls among his parents grandchildren - a masculine race.

Inquiries if parents went to Martyrs Shrine last Sunday.

Tells of visit to dentist.

Grapes are being harvested, but the weather has been wet.

Anecdote about his class in English.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 17 octobre 1960

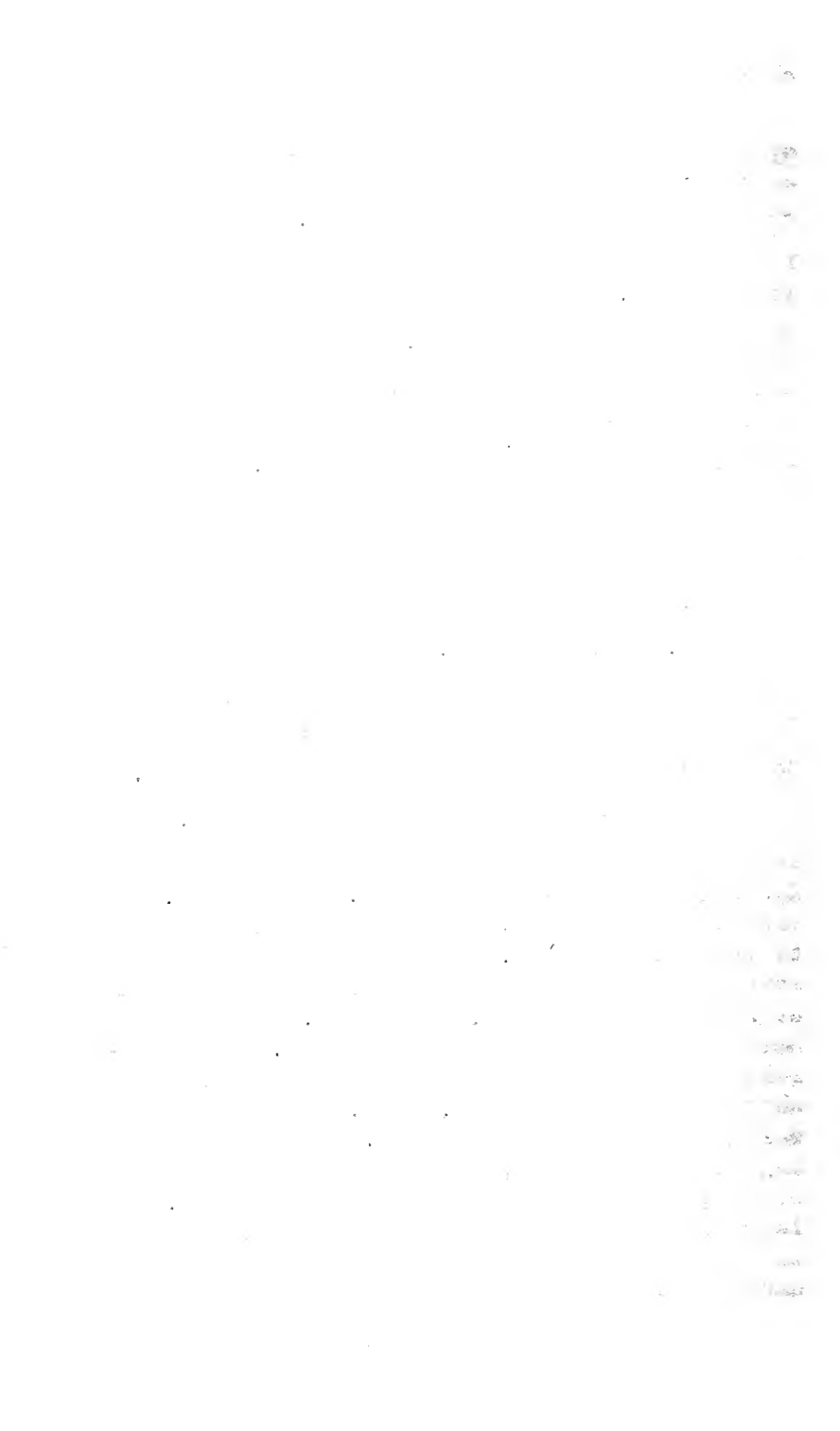
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Acknowledges letter with Mass stipend. Apologizes for missing weekly letter.

Congratulates Kink on her promotion at work.

Thanks Lou for a cheery and newsy letter.

Yesterday afternoon four of us drove into Lyons (about 40 miles) to see, guess what, a mushroom exhibition. In the huge exhibits hall of the Lycée Ampère, we edged our way around several long tables examining plate after plate of labelled mushrooms, real ones. There must have been over 300 different kinds, each carefully and completely identified with a note whether it is excellent, fair, uneatable, sickening or downright poisonous. By far the majority are edible, though some better than others, and only a few out and out deadly. We learned two or three new types that can be found in our woods or meadows near here and that are excellent. I was amazed at the number of people



who jammed the hall, not just Sunday afternoon sightseers, but real fans (I was going to write 'fanatics'), so you see we are not the only 'queers'. As a matter of fact, the season is a good one this year, with the result that the forests and woods are constantly scoured by mushroom hunters. When one reflects on the great variety (there are over 10,000 known species), it becomes a fascinating hobby.

Our heat has been turned on these past few days to counteract a raw north wind that has been keeping most of us indoors. Can winter be on us already?

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 4 novembre 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Observations on the effects of wet weather on students and teachers.

All of us were out for the feast of All Saints helping in the different parishes. I was once again at Saint-Julien-Molin-Molette, where penitents kept me in the confessional for close to nine hours. True to custom, in the afternoon of the First we went in procession to the cemetery to pray for the deceased. The people over here combine the two feasts, wrongly in my opinion, mainly because many of them are free on November 1st whereas they have to work on November 2nd. Wednesday and Thursday of this week were also holidays, so we had two days to rest up a bit before taking up classes again this morning. The next break will be Christmas now, and it is surprising how quickly the weeks go in.



Comments on the fatigue of the family from events in Lindsay.

Observations on the Algerian crisis.

But in spite of the critical situation there (Algeria), we are all following the presidential campaign in the United States, with some for Kennedy and some for Nixon, and several undecided. We received TIME magazine here which keeps us up to date on American developments, and the London TABLET, which often comments on affairs in the United States. From a distance it seems to have been a close struggle, but we have the idea that it has already lasted too long. Not only must the campaign cost an enormous amount of money, but the candidates must be getting gaffed out, and surely a good number of TV watchers must be reaching the saturation point. So many judgments are made hurriedly to convince someone or other, so many words uttered ... in normal times a president would not say half as much in twice the time.

I received a letter from Michel Deglène the other day in which he asked to be remembered to you. He is still at the Seminary, 95 St. Joseph Street, Toronto, so if you happen to be in the area some time he would love you to drop in and say hello. His partner, Jacques Deglesne, is still in Algeria, alas, but hopes to be home this December.

P.S. Forgot to acknowledge letter of October 24th and the Mass intentions enclosed.

\* \* \*





November 26, 1960

145

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 26 novembre 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks apologize for not writing before this and pleads the burden of correcting exam papers.

Acknowledges letter, Mass intentions, and a book sent by Kink.

Junior seminarians and Legion of Mary members will go to Lyon this year on December 8th to see the famous illuminations.

We still hear conflicting reports about the presidency in the United States. The French newspapers don't seem to know yet whether Mr. Kennedy will end up President or not. It will be a blow to U.S. prestige abroad if he does not because he has already been congratulated by all the heads of states. Maybe they spoke too soon. Hope everyone is well and that you are still enjoying some late summer weather. It is rather pleasant here just now.

\* \* \*

Annonay, December 17, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks apologize for late letter.

Our weather has been cold and miserable ever since last Saturday, the day our furnace broke down. We have been confined to two rooms, electrically heated, this past week, the infirmary and the community room. It is there we have been preparing classes, correcting papers and all that occupies us outside of classroom hours. Only at night do we dare



December 17, 1960

146

penetrate the cold zone of our rooms to go to bed under umpteen blankets. The faulty part was removed today, however, and replaced by a new one that came all the way from Strasbourg, so we're hoping for the best tonight.

This has been a week of term exams with a marks deadline of this coming Tuesday.

Father Madden is with us just now, Father Bob (brother of Father John Madden whom I believe you have met - Superior of St. Michael's College, Toronto). Father Bob is studying in London, alone, and I think is very happy to come to Annonay to be with some Basilian confreres again. At the same time he is picking up a little French.

Closing remarks.

\* \* \*

Annonay, December 21, 1960.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

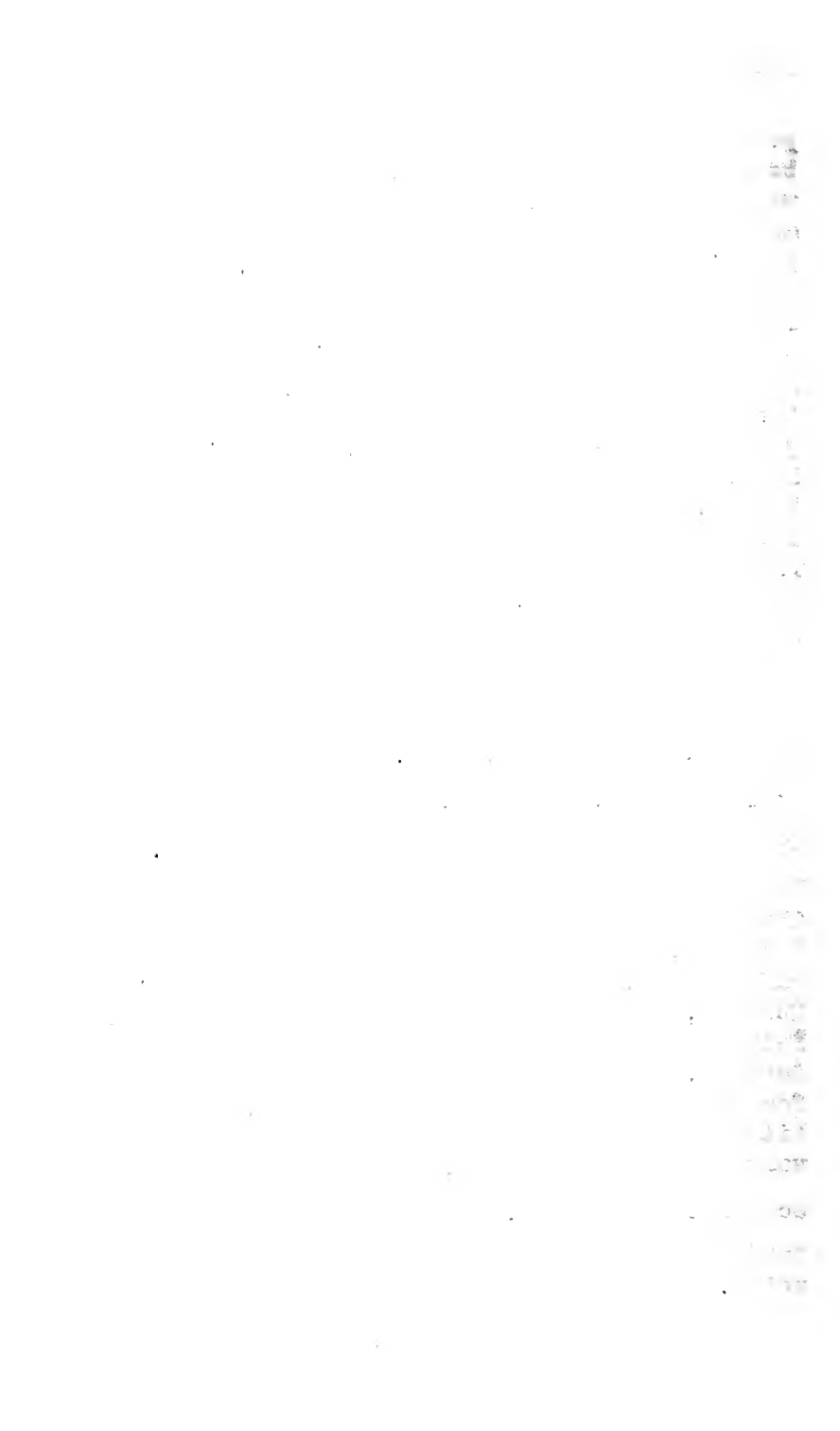
Opening remarks convey Christmas greetings.

Father Carroll mentioned in a recent letter that he expected Father John Madden down to help out. I hope he finds time to come over and see you. He is Superior of St. Michael's College, and has a brother a Basilian as well, Father Bob, who is at present with us here in Annonay. He came down from London to spend a few days in the company of confreres, he is a bit lonesome, I suspect, all alone in that vast English metropolis.

School closed today.

Send a French Christmas stamp with religious motif.

\* \* \*



December 29, 1960

147

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 29 décembre 1960.

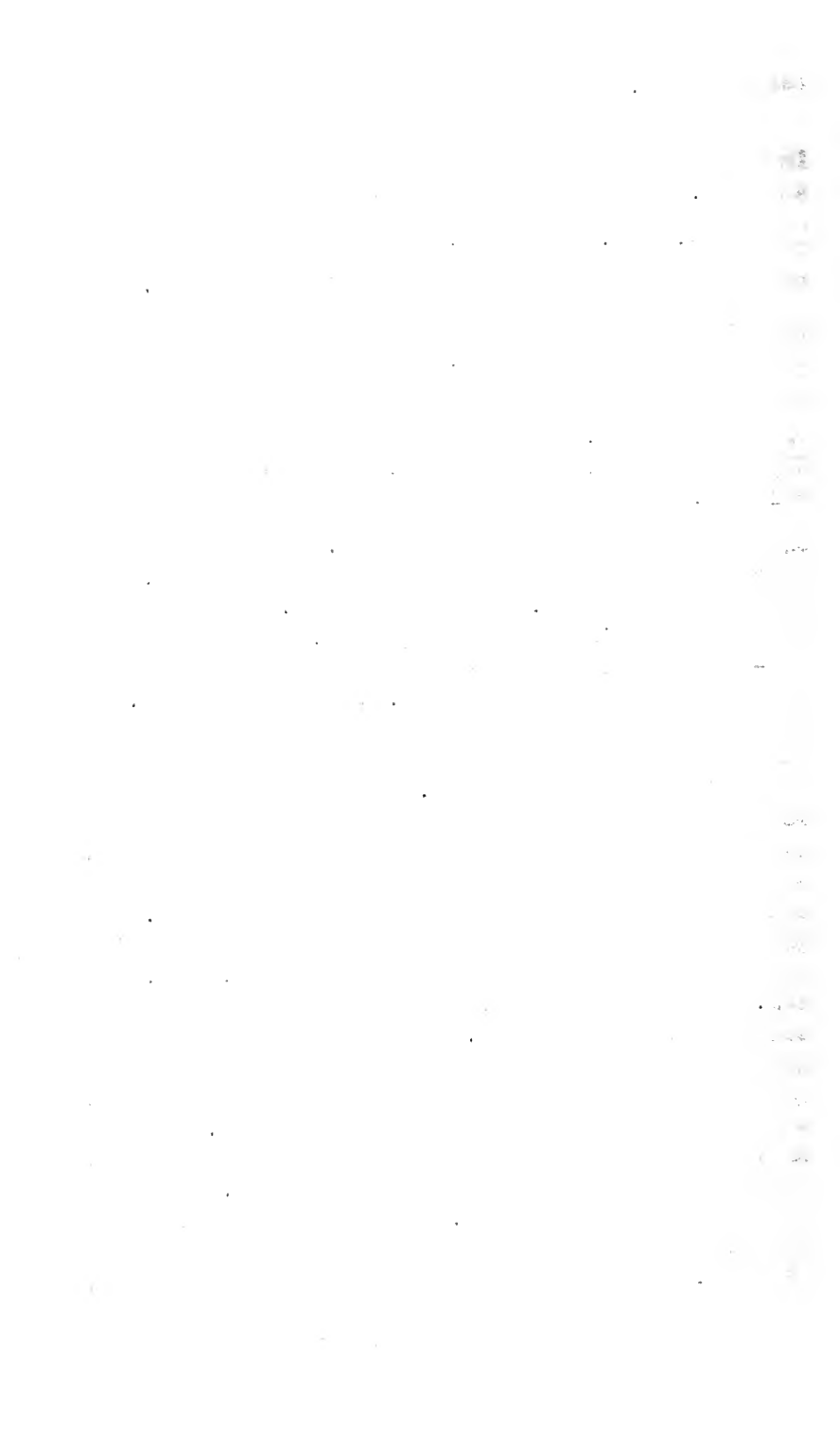
Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks extend New Year's greetings.

Acknowledges letter of December 19th with Mass  
intention for Aunt Mary.

Thanks mother for a gift parcel that arrived  
the day before, he went out to a parish for  
Christmas work. Went to St. Julien-Molin-  
Molette.

One of the parishioners from St. Julien-Molin-  
Molette came down to pick me up December 23,  
the eve of the eve, for confessions. I stayed  
at the priest's house, of course, and both of  
us - the pastor and I - kept hearing almost  
steadily until about 7:30 p.m. Christmas eve.  
Midnight Mass was to be preceded by the trad-  
itional procession of the altar boys to the  
ceib with the Child Jesus. But just as we were  
to start out very solemnly (I carrying the  
Child) the lights went out in the entire church.  
An unbelievable disorder and unrest in the  
sacristy followed on this orderly beginning.  
Was it a switch? Where are the switches? Who's  
got a light? Bring that candle closer, etc.,  
etc. Surplices, albs, heads and arms flurried  
about in tragic dismay. A number of willing  
laymen who had been sitting about the altar in  
the sanctuary rushed in to offer their services,  
which of course increased the confusion. At  
last the pastor put his hand on a master switch,  
flicked it on and the lights came back. General  
satisfaction and relief. Another line-up, then  
CLICK! the same switch snapped off with no one  
near it, leaving us all again in utter darkness.



Heavens! Heavens! cried the curé, what on earth is wrong with the thing? More flurry, more confusion, more men to the rescue. Well to make a long story short, too much power was coming through the line causing the automatic switch to release automatically. The circuit breaker was too weak to bear all the power needed for the lights, plus three electric motors: the furnace lower, the organ blower, and the bells in the tower, with the result that it simply broke the circuit (to protect the fuses) everytime the furnace blower went into operation while the organ was playing, or the church clock struck. Nothing apparently could be done about it, so we went on with the ceremony, somewhat accelerated and shortened. I sang the High Mass and preached while the curé led the congregation in singing. After the 30th or 40th black-out we got so we didn't mind too much and could carry on with the light of a candle or tow, but the joyful and prayerful atmosphere that usually surrounds the lovely Christmas Midnight Mass was seriously impaired. After Mass, that is after my second Mass which followed the first one immediately the pastor came up to me as I was divesting and wearily exclaimed, "Well this is one Christmas we'll not soon forget". It might well have been even more unforgettable had the electrician who installed the circuit breaker switch (just a week or so previousl) shown up when the curé was nearing the apogée of his rage. I really believe it would have been a case of "Murder in the Cathedral" (with all due respect to day's saint, Thomas à Becket).

Closing remarks.

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January 27, 1961

149

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 27 janvier 1961.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks.

Wednesday afternoon I threw a little tea party, another one, for Fathers Charlie Principe and Bill Marceau, at which we not only drank tea, but enjoyed some delicious Christmas cake. It is keeping splendidly, and I really believe tastes more scrumptious every time. The two fathers in question both send their sincere thanks once again.

It looks as though I may not have this letter in the mail tonight as planned. One of my former students, who is now studying at the state collegiate, dropped in to say hello and stayed for over half an hour. He had such poor marks while here that his father decided to have him change schools, and now he is almost at the top of his class. I don't know if that means that our methods are wanting, or if the state school standards are low. I rather suspect the latter, but maybe they are saying the same thing about us.

We followed Mr. Kennedy's installation with great interest. There seems to be a wave of hope and renewed courage on this side of the world. Of course, we cannot expect him to solve all the globe's problems, but the prospects are looking up, which is something.

Sorry this is such a short scribbly note, but there is still a chance to get it off tonight. Best to all once again.

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February 7, 1961

150

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le February 7, 1961.

My dear Kink,

A long overdue answer to a lovely Christmas card and a very generous Christmas gift which makes possible renewing his subscription to the London TABLET.

Visit of Kink to Greg in Niagara Falls.

Thanks for the book of Indian tales which he uses in English classes.

Difficulties of teaching English to French students.

Mother and Dad seem to be keeping well. Isn't it a wonderful blessing? Tell them not to stint on the coal or good substantial food during the rigorous winter months. Should either of them fall seriously ill, don't hesitate to wire, Kink. You know I can be home in a matter of hours and both permission and money are just waiting for the word. Let us hope they will not have to be used, but I want you to know a speedy return on short notice is not out of the question. Better close for this time, with my very best in wishes and prayers.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le February 12, 1961.

Dear Mom.

This being a special date, I thought it only fitting to write you a special note of congratulations and good wishes, and sincerely beg your pardon that I was unable to write it



sooner so that you would receive it, if not on the day itself, Sunday, at least the following morning. Let us hope your birthday has been as pleasant as all of us wish it to be, and that you will follow Dad's good example by celebrating many more.

This morning found me out in the little parish up in the hills, where I was obliged to say Mass for the intention announced. But yesterday, feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, I offered the promised Mass for you and Dad as a joint birthday gift.

Thank you so much for the last intention, the money order for which arrived safely this past week. I shall say them as soon as possible; just now my intention is Aunt Lucy each day, but I think the last one for her will be acquitted in about two weeks time.

What a big cake you must require now to accommodate all those candles! I should think the first one or two would be well burned down by the time the 80th one was lit. Or do you attribute a value of ten years to each candle, and settle for eight? That would be an easier way of assuring their complete extinction at one reasonable puff, but hardly the fairest and squarest solution. Personally, I am of the opinion that once the number exceeds 70, or thereabouts, but husband and wife should be allowed to extinguish them in a joint effort.

In any case, each candle represents a precious period of time, some enveloping joys, others sorrows, but the ensemble adding up to a beautiful life of dedication and love. If the rest of us can come anywhere near such a fine record, we shall feel grateful and attribute our success to those who made it possible.



February 26, 1961

152

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 26 février 1961.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Apologizes for missing a letter due to pressure of school work. Is in good health. The weather in Annonay is mild and some fruit trees are in bloom. The photographs of the eclipse did not turn out, but he will send some snaps that came out well.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 18 mars, 1961.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Opening remarks concern the feast of St. Patrick.

Well, you have no doubt by now heard the startling news about our Superior General, Father George Flahiff, whom Rome has literally kidnapped from our Basilian family to make him Archbishop of Winnipeg. We were left speechless at the news and have scarcely yet caught enough breath to utter our reactions. It is undoubtedly a signal honour for our Congregation to have one of our members chosen for so lofty a place in the hierarchy. We can't help feeling somewhat decapitated, nonetheless, with the choice of our No. 1, particularly since he was so recently re-elected for another six years. And what is even sadder, perhaps more so for him, he will henceforth be separated from the Community, his talents lost to us, and the cherished company of the confreres to him. Of course, I should not say "lost", for





March 18, 1961

153

he will continue to be a Basilian, and we shall see him from time to time, but he will no longer be free to take the active and even leading part in the life of the community that he would, had no such appointment been made. So you see, in a way we are happy and thankful, in another way we lament his having to leave us. Of course, our loss is Winnipeg's gain. There are not many of his quality: spiritual, intellectual, practical. He will surely win untold graces for the archdiocese there. We have received no further word beyond the telegram announcing his elevation, so that we have no idea when he will be consecrated, nor when his successor will be elected. An extraordinary chapter will have to be convoked to proceed to a new election, but that may not take place for some time yet.

Thanks Kink for forest fire prevention booklets and other folders which will be useful in English classes.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 14 avril, 1961.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Kink,

Here it is Gertrude's anniversary once again. I was fortunate in being free to offer Mass for her this morning. How the time flies by! 18 years already. But that after all is so little when reckoned in terms of eternity.

Speaking of Masses, thank you for the four intentions included in your last letter, Mom, for Loe. Poor man, he did not last long in



April 14, 1961

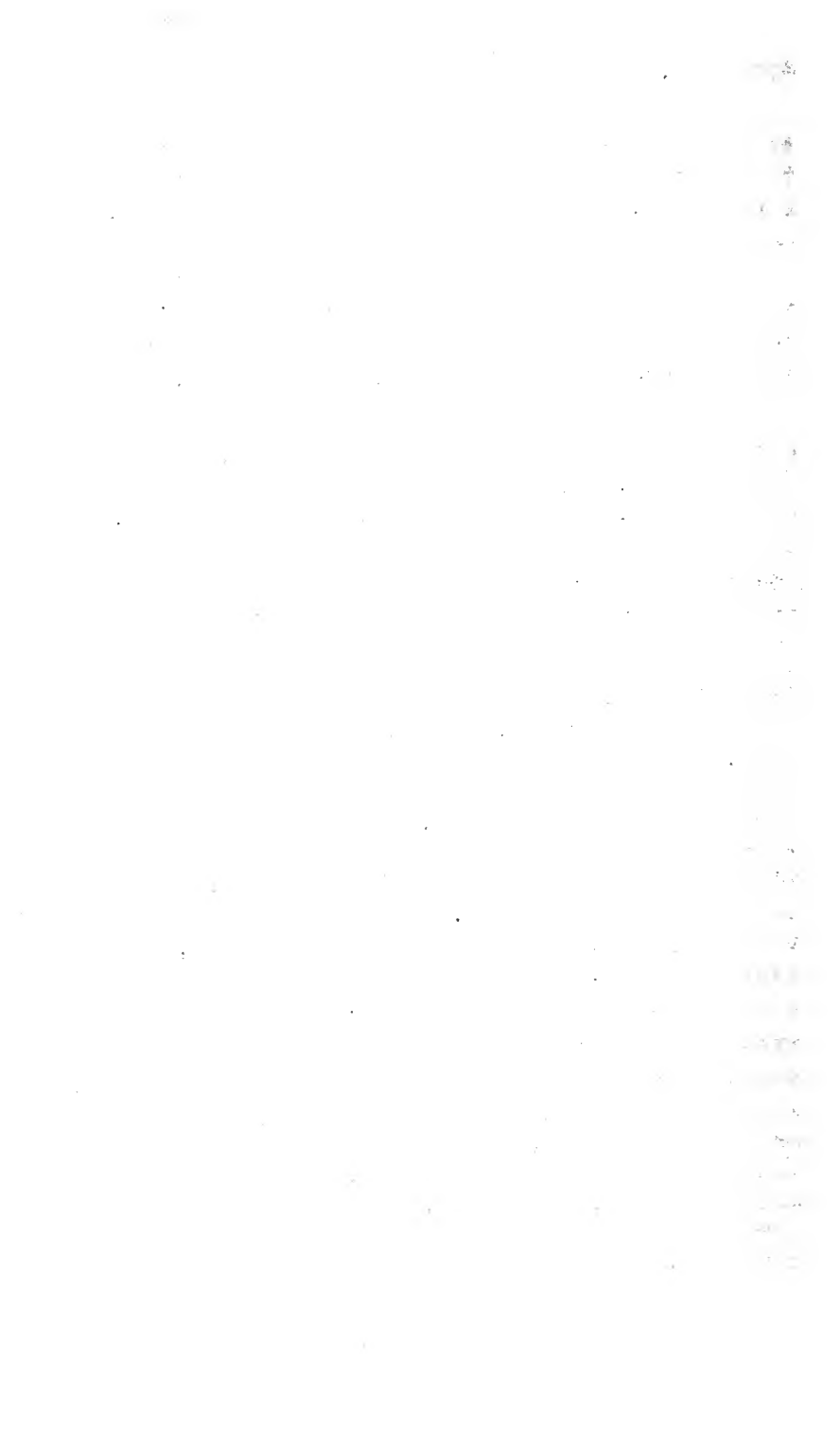
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the hospital; it seemed but the time between two letters that he went to Toronto and came back again. You will miss his sparkling wit and solid faith, but we are consoled to know that all of that does not end with death, rather it just begins to come to fruition.

The Postal order arrived this morning for the four above-mentioned Masses. Once again, my sincere thanks.

After a long period of cloudless days, a very long period, we are keeping indoors today out of the rain. Our old friend, the south wind, started to sway trees and heave on houses a day or two ago, working the boys (and teachers) up to a point of nervous exhaustion, then suddenly fell and left the region covered with weepy clouds that at the moment are literally drenching us. One can almost hear the leaves and flowers applaud, they were parched for so long. Our lilacs are out in full bloom, iris and lilly of the valley, filling the air with their odoriferous beauty, the tulips have started to shed their petals, and the roses will be bursting out any of these days, once the sun comes back out. The season is really very advanced, according to our gardener, and everyone else. They fear cold weather and even frosts a little later on.

This Sunday we're to act as host to all who are interested in the coming Ecumenical Council. Three professors from the University of Lyons are to give talks, one is a specialist in matters of the church in Asia, another in Africa, and the third, I believe, is to present a history of all the councils in the church up to this one. It should prove very interesting



and profitable. The conferences are to take place in our senior study-hall.

No doubt the astronaut Gagarine is the subject of much talk in your quarter of the world, as he is here. It was a fine piece of work, from all reports, a breath-taking one, I found, as he related what went on within the space capsule once beyond the attraction of the earth. The Russians have reason to rejoice, but I hope they won't make too much of it. After all, it is just another exploit in the world of science and that doesn't alter in the least the definition of man nor his eternal destiny. It would be too bad if this successful experiment were attributed to a man-made state to the exclusion of the Creator of the whole Cosmos, but we can't expect much else from a Communist society.

Word came from Father Wally Platt yesterday that our superior general, Father George Flahiff, is to be consecrated May 31st, feast of Our Lady, Queen of the Universe. The Chapter will probably take place sometime in July, but no date has been settled upon as yet by the General Council.

Please extend my sympathy to Mr. Holmes the next time you see him. He will surely feel lost without his wife. It sounds as though death surprised her without much warning, even though everyone was aware of her serious heart condition.

Looks like my page is soon to go skew-gee in the machine, so better bang up the final period. Best to all as usual, with a continued remembrance in my prayers.

\* \* \*



September 1, 1967

156

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le September 1/67.

Dear Mom and Kink,

Arrived at our destination this afternoon in beautiful weather and in good shape.

Father George Beaune and I made a point of seeing parts of London we had not seen before: Billingsgate which has been a fish market for 1000 years and still handles all fish for London; Pdding Lane where the GreatFire of 1667 broke out. The accent is authentically Cockney in that section, and would take some getting used to. We also sepnt a few hours in the National Art Gallery and concentrated solely on British painters of the 18th and 19th centuries: Reynolds, Gainsborough, Turner, Hogarth, etc. The second day there we took a river boat down the Thames to Greenwich, seeing on the way all the ports where much of London's and England's food comes in. We managed to eat a couple of good meals and were delighted to taste good English ale again.

We flew by British European Airways to Paris (were scheduled to fly by Air France but missed the plane!) on Thursday afternoon and spent the night at the Basilian House of Studies. This morning we had to be up and about early to catch the 7:45 train to Lyons on the other side of the city. It was packed with travellers, so we stood in the corridor all the way. It's not, however, the first time I've had to do that.

Father Marcel L'extrait met us at St. Rombert d'Albon and drove us to Annonay. Since arrival we have done little more than eat something, meet the confreres who are about at the moment,





September 1, 1967

157

rest a bit and begin unpacking.

It is as though I have only been away a few months so familiar the old house seems to me and the surroundings. Father Jean Roure, the Superior, has given me a fine suite: office and bedroom, the one occupied by Father Charles Roume at the time of his death. In fact many of his things are still here. I cannot say the arthritis has disappeared yet, if anything it is a bit worse with the strain of travel, change of food and loss of sleep. But everyone assures me it will disappear, that it is not a common ailment in these parts. So we'll hope for the best.

I know you will keep up the good prayers; they mean so much to me, but don't say too many. I don't want you to be burdened with hours of devotions.

Shall write again when we get a little better settled in. All the best to everyone.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur,  
Annonay, le 6 septembre 1967.

Dear Mom and Kink,

Already six days have gone by since our arrival back in Annonay, and already I have renewed acquaintance with a number of people whom I knew five years ago: the Chief of Police (for my residence card), the barber, the butcher, one of the clothiers, two local doctors, one nursing sister, an electrician, a photographer, a shoe merchant, and the family of one of our scholastics. So you see I have been shopping



September 6, 1967

158

a bit and gathering some essential papers and documents which will permit me to teach in France.

Don't be alarmed at my having to consult two doctors within the first six days, the first was to secure a chest x-ray certificate which only took about five minutes, the second was to get a general health certificate which really didn't take much longer. The question of the arthritis came up, of course, and a new prescription to replace my twenty aspirin a day, some sort of medicament (three pills a day) which one can procure easily in Annonay. I am to go back to him, to this second doctor in three weeks time to give him a report, and give him a chance to diagnose in a little more detail. In general, I am feeling fine, the arthritis is no worse, and everything else is A-1-OK.

As you might guess from the professions mentioned above, I have bought a new suit, dark grey, the colour the priests wear over here, and a new pair of shoes with softer soles which help my sore foot considerably. I have yet to pick up a couple of clerical shirts and a sort of lab coat to go over everything, then I shall be all set to enter the ring of the classroom. My wardrobe had become rather depleted in Toronto, but I preferred to wait until arriving in France before purchasing anything new.

The weather is rainy and overcast today, but it has been very nice since our arrival, quite warm in fact. September and even October are often very beautiful over here. This whole summer has been very dry in France, the fields



are pretty well burned up, so normally it should prove to be an excellent season for wine. If the farmers get good weather to harvest the grapes, a little later this month, then we can put down 1967 as a good year in wines.

The house is rather quiet here at the moment as most of the confreres are away on retreat. They are making it at Ars, the famous village of St. John Marie Vianney, about 20 miles north of Lyons. We have three boys who are beginning their novitiate over here this year; with the four who are already scholastics, that makes a little nucleus upon which to build for the future.

Must be off now to have my passport photocopied. Shall write again soon. Love and prayers as always.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 14 septembre 1967.

Dear Mom and Kink,

It was good to receive your letter this morning Mom, and be brought up to date on all the latest news in the family clan. It was the first letter I have received since arriving here two weeks ago.

You will be glad to know the arthritis has not got any worse, and that I have even felt limber enough to go out into the woods a couple of times hunting for mushrooms. It is the season for them just now over here, but the summer has been so dry there aren't many growing, either good or bad.



School starts this coming Monday, and as usual, will catch me with very little preparation done. I shall be teaching the two senior years, both boys and girls, which corresponds roughly to our first two years of college in Canada, though the students are younger here by about a year or two. I shall be teaching English, both literature and language, plus oral work. My schedule doesn't look like it's going to be very heavy, at least to start off. One sometimes picks up things in the course of the year.

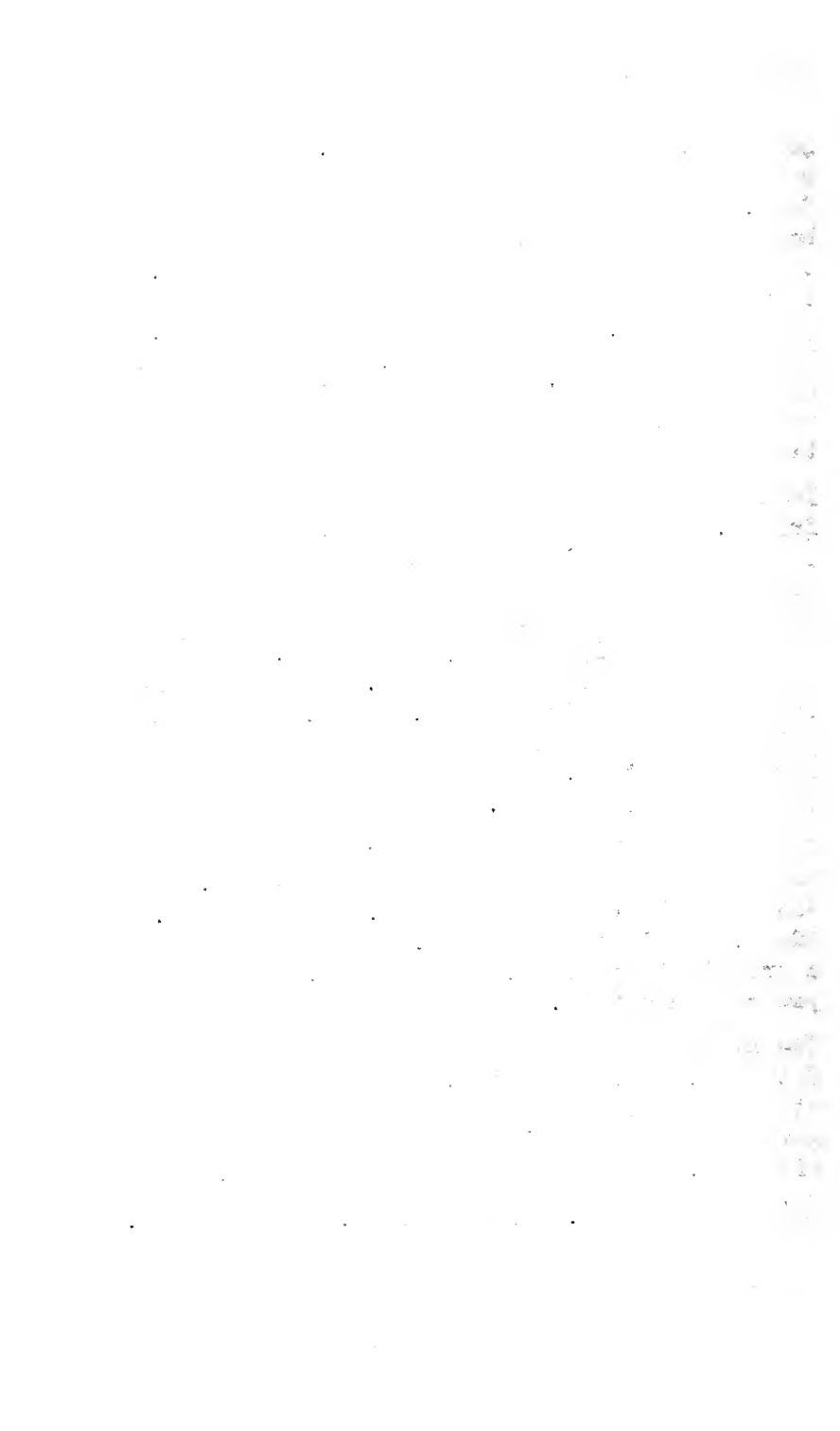
Yesterday I accompanied one of the French confreres, Father Georges Reynouard, to his home in the lower Ardèche (about 120 miles south of here) where we enjoyed a visit with his mother and brought back seven crates full of ripe grapes plus a 15 gallon jug of wine, and a small sack of fresh ripe figs. The wine harvest is just beginning now, and everyone with a ten foot square vineyard or more is praying for fine weather. It is apparently impossible to harvest wet grapes.

Father Wally Platt returned to Annonay the day before yesterday after a month in Canada. He also will be teaching English. His brother, Edwin, a priest in Toronto, just opened a new church last week, St. Thomas More. Perhaps you read about it.

One of our priests in Windsor died recently, Father Vincent Fullerton. He was a delegate at the Chapter this summer in Rochester and gave a very fine talk on the Latin American Missions. I know you will pray for him.

Better close now. All the best, with prayers.

\* \* \*





September 20, 1967

161

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 20 Septembre 1967, Mercredi.

Dear Mom and Kink,

I have received a letter from both of you by now. Sincere thanks for writing and all my encouragement every time you feel like taking pen in hand. News from home while one is overseas is just as welcome as it ever was.

We open our classroom doors Monday of this week and things are pretty well underway now. My students appear to have a sort of late summer sag in their expression, but I suppose that is common the world over, it's not all that much fun leaving holiday freedom to come back to a schoolroom bench. Two of my classes are mixed, boys and girls, two all boys, and all of them French, of course. They understand a fair amount of English and write it with some facility though not always accurately. My predecessor in this job, Father Charles Principe, who is now preparing a doctoral thesis in Paris, managed to inculcate in them most of the elements of basic vocabulary and style. Father Wally Platt teaches English here too, and a layman, hired this year, Monsieur Ayme, a Frenchman, who has been assigned the lower grades. I personally think it is a mistake on the part of the administration here to confide the beginners to a non-native (not of the English-tongue), but Mr. Ayme may well prove me wrong in the course of the year. I hope he does.

The new medication has improved my arthritic condition considerably. I feel much less pain and walk with scarcely any limp. Though I don't think a set of tennis with either Father

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September 20, 1967

162

Wally Platt or Father George Beaune is quite possible yet, nevertheless it may be by springtime.

I have found no difficulty whatever in adapting to the type of life lived here, the food, the schedule, the interests, the mentality. I never really lost contact with it during my five years in Toronto. My ear and luency in French suffered somewhat, I am realized that now, but I hope they will come back in a few weeks.

My trunk finally arrived, the day before yesterday, with everything inside intact albeit a bit crumpled.

Kink was asking about the advisability of an electric blanket. I have made on inquiry and find they are available, but rather expensive and not widely used. I'll get some more precise information for the next letter. Greetings to everyone and prayers.

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Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, September 27, 1967.

Dear Mom and Kink,

I'm not sure now if I acknowledged your last letters. Thank you both for writing and please forgive me if I don't always reply promptly. We are off to a good start in the school year; already the students are complaining of too much work piled on them, and the professors of the sad state of their pupils after a whole summer's recess. So that is probably a healthy sign and normal state of affairs. It was ever thus.

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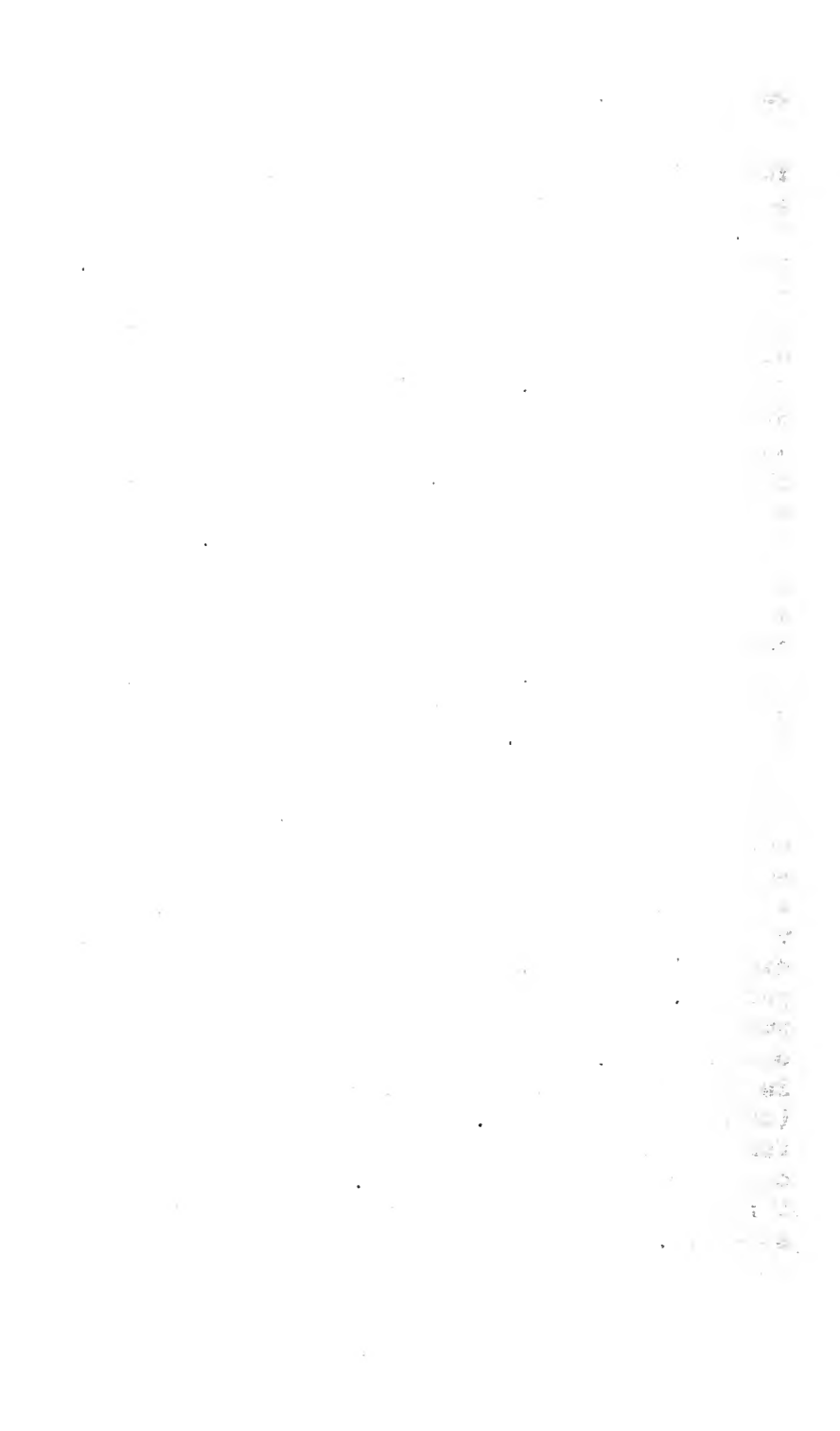
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You can't imagine what lovely weather we have been enjoying this past week, ideal for everyone, but especially for the wine growers who are in the midst of the wine harvest right now. This late September sun is just what the grapes need to take on a final degree or two of alcoholic content, indispensable for a better than average wine. A day's rain, followed by strong sun would be ideal at this time, for then the grapes swell to give a more plentiful yield at the wine press, but would not lessen the goodness of their present content after having ripened in several weeks of sun.

I must add this warm air is also good for my arthritic joints, to such an extent that at certain times I almost think the pain has disappeared for good. Of course it hasn't yet, but perhaps with patience and the dryer climate it will eventually.

We are teaching girls in our school as well as boys this year for the first time. It is an unsettling experience for some of the teachers who have never known anything but a male regime. With my own background of collegiate days, university years and teaching mixed classes at St. Michael's College, I really don't see the problem. A big concern this week is where to put the girls in the chapel for the school opening Mass: at the front (too distracting), in the middle (even worse), or at the back (downright impolite). The controversy raged for a while but came to a halt when the director opted for the third position. I find the whole thing rather amusing, and so I think do the studnets.



October 2, 1967

164

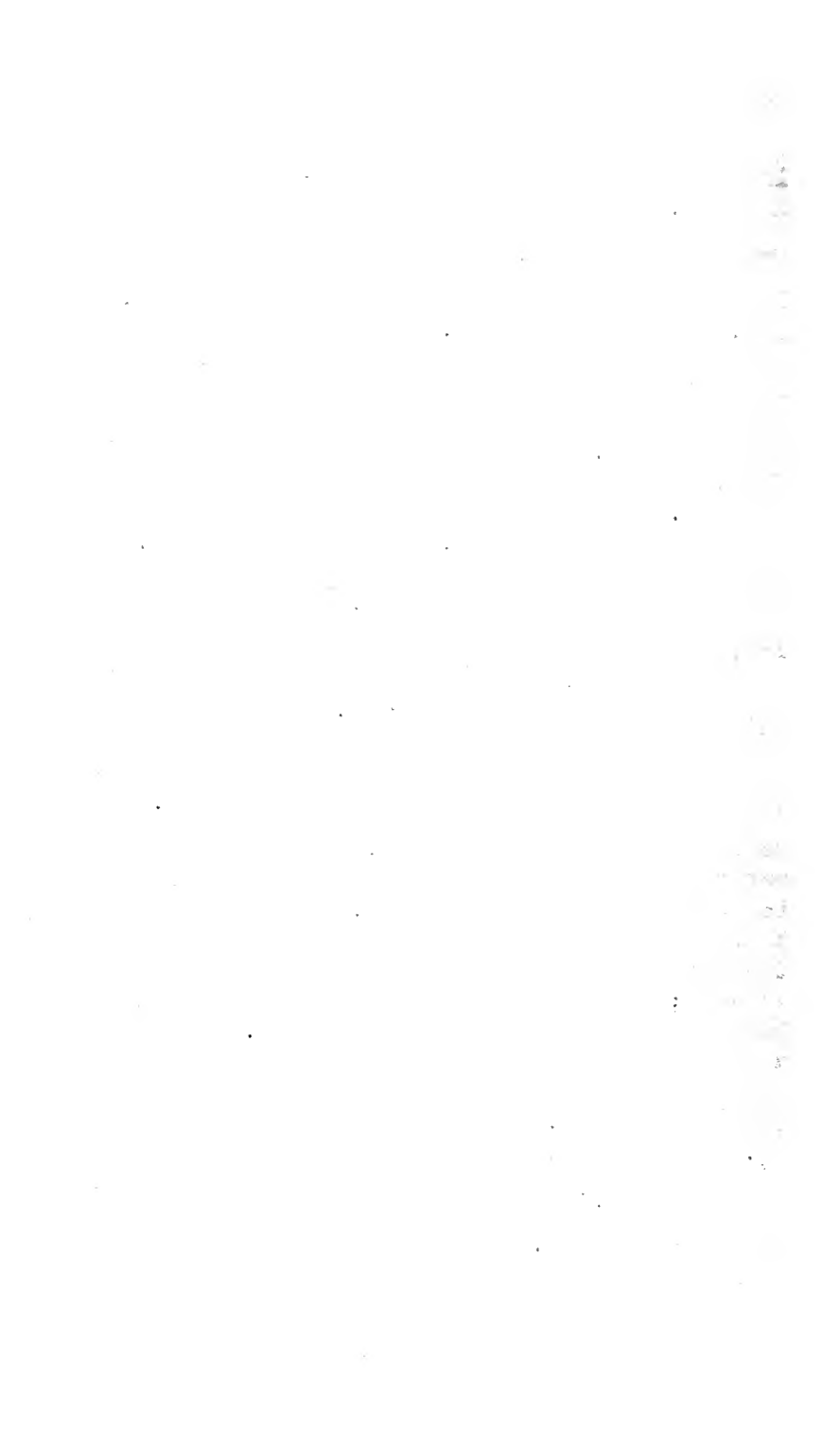
Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 2 octobre 1967

Dear Mom and Kink,

I have your last letter here in front of me, Mom, that of October 2. Thank you once again for writing and bringing me up to date. Though I didn't mention it in my last letter, I offered Mass for you and Dad on your 59th anniversary, September 29. It was quite a splendid Mass in fact, for all the students and professors were present. Six of us concelebrated with the director of the school, Father René Robert, who gave a fine talk on the faith as the theme of this year's academic work.

Yes, I received the special issue of the Canadian Register. Many thanks for getting it for me, Kink, and mailing it over. On reading some of the write-ups I was brought back to the University of Toronto campus again and in particular to the week of the great Congress.

School is well underway now, and I am pleasantly surprised that it is no especially difficult to get back into the harness. It was probably a good thing that I kept on doing a little teaching while Superior at the Seminary in Toronto; otherwise it might have been a bit harder to go back into the classroom. We held a department meeting this afternoon (English department) which began fittingly enough with tea and cookies. The meeting took place at Mr. Ayne's home, one of the English professors who is French; so we drank our tea out a bowl. I really don't know what they have against cups and saucers.





October 2, 1967

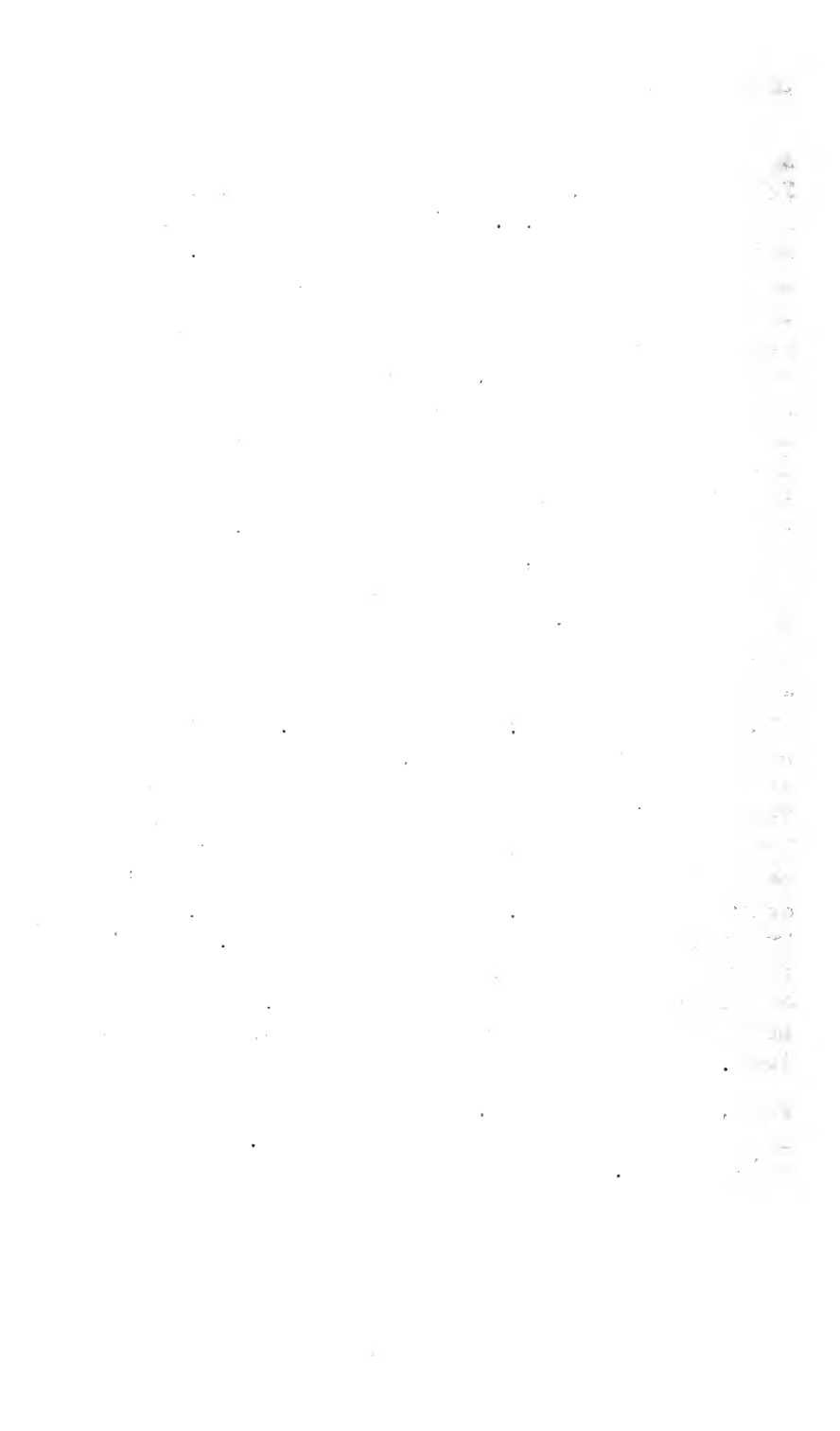
165

Speaking of meetings, I attended a jim-dandy Monday evening. It started at 5:30 p.m. and ran on to 10:30 p.m., right through supper which we ate and nibbled at as we argued. It was a meeting of diocesan clergy, priest teachers, brothers, sisters, to attempt some sort of co-ordination in our Catholic Action work and encourage more co-operation generally. In typical French style, everyone (23 of us) talked at once for a good part of it, disagreed entirely with whomever could shout the loudest to get the floor, and came away satisfied we had had a splendid exchange of views. In fact, we solved nothing, and got nowhere except to arrange for another meeting! It took me two days to recover.

You may remember me telling you about the scholastic at the seminary last year who won a Rhodes Scholarship: Bob Barringer. He has been staying here at the school in Annonay for the past couple of months brushing up on his French. Yesterday I took him to the train which would bring him to Paris, whence he will make his way over to Oxford to begin his three years' course (Patrology). Another scholastic, John Tucker, is applying this year from St. Basil's Seminary in Toronto, and has asked me to write a letter of recommendation for him. They are both wonderful young men and first-rate Basilians.

Well, bett close now. Shall try to drop a line to Bernie while he is with you. Love and prayers.

\* , \*



October 3, 1967

166

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 3 octobre 1967.

Dear Mom and Kink,

The sun is slipping down behind the Cevennes Mountains to the west of us, bringing another lovely warm autumn day to a close. Of late not only have the days been sunny and pleasant but even the nights, as though we were still in late July. Last night, for example, I had an opportunity to feel just how much of the day's warmth remained in the air, for I was called to the aid of our poor gardener at 1:00 whose cries for help waked me and apparently no one else. He has not been well for the past few months, due in the main to excessive alcohol, and retired from regular work in the garden shortly after I arrived here (Sept. 1). From what I could put together of his story last night, he went out for a walk in the garden, fell and could not get up again on his feet. (He does suffer from rheumatism rather badly) He made his way along the ground, slowly and painfully until he came to the playground where he began calling for help. He is such a slight man now that it was not hard for me to help him up and lead him step by step to his room in Maison St. Joseph at the other end of our property, a distance of roughly from your house to George and Anne's. He was lucid enough and not under the influence as far as I could tell, but utterly exhausted by the time we made it to his room. I made some tea for him (refreshing and innocuous, I thought) and got him to bed, all of which took about an hour. I got back to be myself about 2:00 a.m. and needless to



October 15, 1967

167

say found it impossible to sleep. The doctor came this morning to see him (this is not the first time he has been found on the ground helpless) and ordered him to the hospital for rest and proper care. From there I understand he is to go to a nursing home. It is probably the best thing for him, even though he does not want to leave his room. If the night had not been so warm, he might well have caught pneumonia. Sorry to have taken up the whole letter with this incident. Shall write again soon.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, 1st October 15, 1967

Dear Mom and Kink,

Yesterday I spent such an interesting afternoon, an entirely new experience for me, that I hasten to tell you about it before forgetting some of the impressions and details.

For the first time in my life I helped to harvest grapes in a real vineyard with a French family who make their own wine. In a way it was a family affair, but rather like our threshings or silo-fillings in Ontario, the neighbours from all around came to help, plus a few cousins from up in the mountains, who, of course, cannot grow grapes on their own property, but enjoy coming down each year to help with the harvest. There were about twenty of us at the job, some picking, some carrying full baskets, some punching down the grapes in large tubs at the end of each row, some working at the press itself near



the farm house. The vineyard was about an acre in size, the vines placed about every three feet in rows about three feet apart. I was one of the pickers and to my astonishment I learned that plucking the bunches of grapes from the vine is not as easy as I had thought. One takes the whole bunch off, but the stem is so securely fastened to the vine you have to cut it off with a knife or sicssors, that is, if you don't know the trick involved, just between the uppermost grapes and the actual vine itself, though not always visible, there is a sort of knob or hard bump. When the stem is bent sharply in the right way juast at that knob it will snap clean and you have the entire bunch in your hand. You throw it into the basket whole and entire (except for a grape or two you may extract for quick consumption) without any particular care as to bruises since the thing is going to be crushed in a matter of minutes anyway at the press. You work with a partner on either side of the same row so that no strain or effort has to be made to reach the bunches on the other side of the vine. Of course the baskets fill up fairly fast, but they are also carried away at frequent intervals by the carriers who leave you an empty so that no time need be lost.

Over here they don't allow the branches of the vine to run along the ground or even along the wires which stretch from one end of the row to the other. Rather, all the branches of each vine stock are tied up, usually with a band of straw and fixed to the stake or wire above them. In this way the bunches of grapes are well exposed to the sun, particularly in the latter part of the ripening season, and by the same





token are more accessible to the picker. Not every bunch hangs down nicely waiting to be snapped off. Some of them, most of them I would say, become entangled with leaf stems or with each other, in which case the breaking off point is not so easily found. They also hang fairly low, too low for one to grapple with them standing erect. You have to bend over considerably or even squat down beside the plant, which various positions take their toll on one's back muscles after a few hours.

In spite of these minor difficulties, however, the whole process of grape harvesting is wonderfully exhilarating. For one thing the whole family work at it, men and women so that the chatter and general atmosphere of the occasion is gay and light-hearted. Children too can help, in fact, the more dexterous of them work away with less stooping and fatigue than their elders. Drinks are brought to the field, wine of course, though not the new wine and a hearty meal served at the end of the day. Though there were quite a few women out working at the grapes, there were enough left to prepare the dinner inside.

Somehow the spirit of carefree joviality has come down over the centuries, for wine making goes back to the days of the Old Testament and beyond. The fruit has a certain goodness about it, both in the eating and in the drinking, a certain wholesome honesty, for nothing really is added to convert the actual raw grapes into excellent wine. It was truly a wonderful experience for me to capture a bit of that spirit, something I did not do before during the whole nine years I was in France. Next time I'll try to describe the process from the bins to the bottles.



October 23, 1967

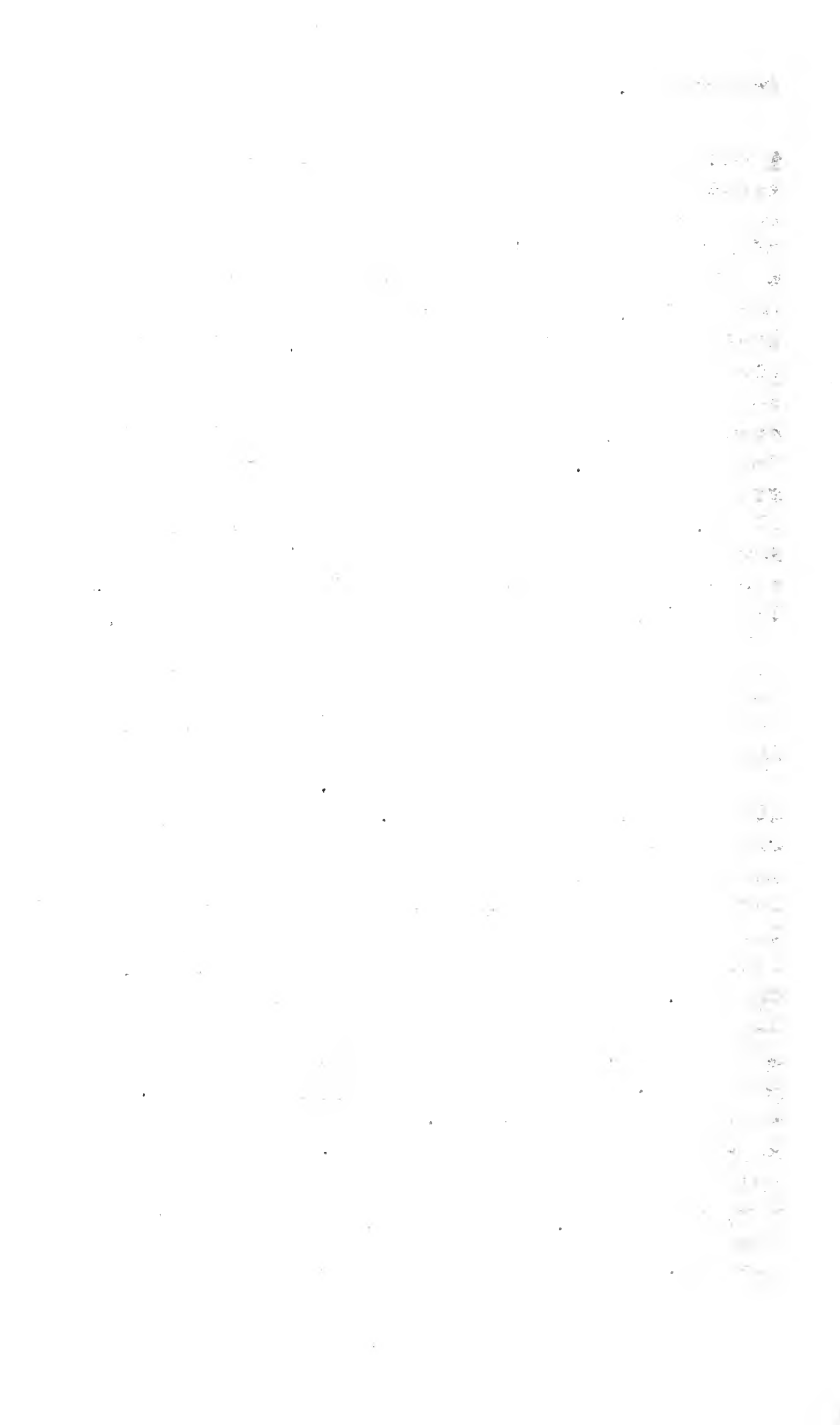
170

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 23 octobre 1967

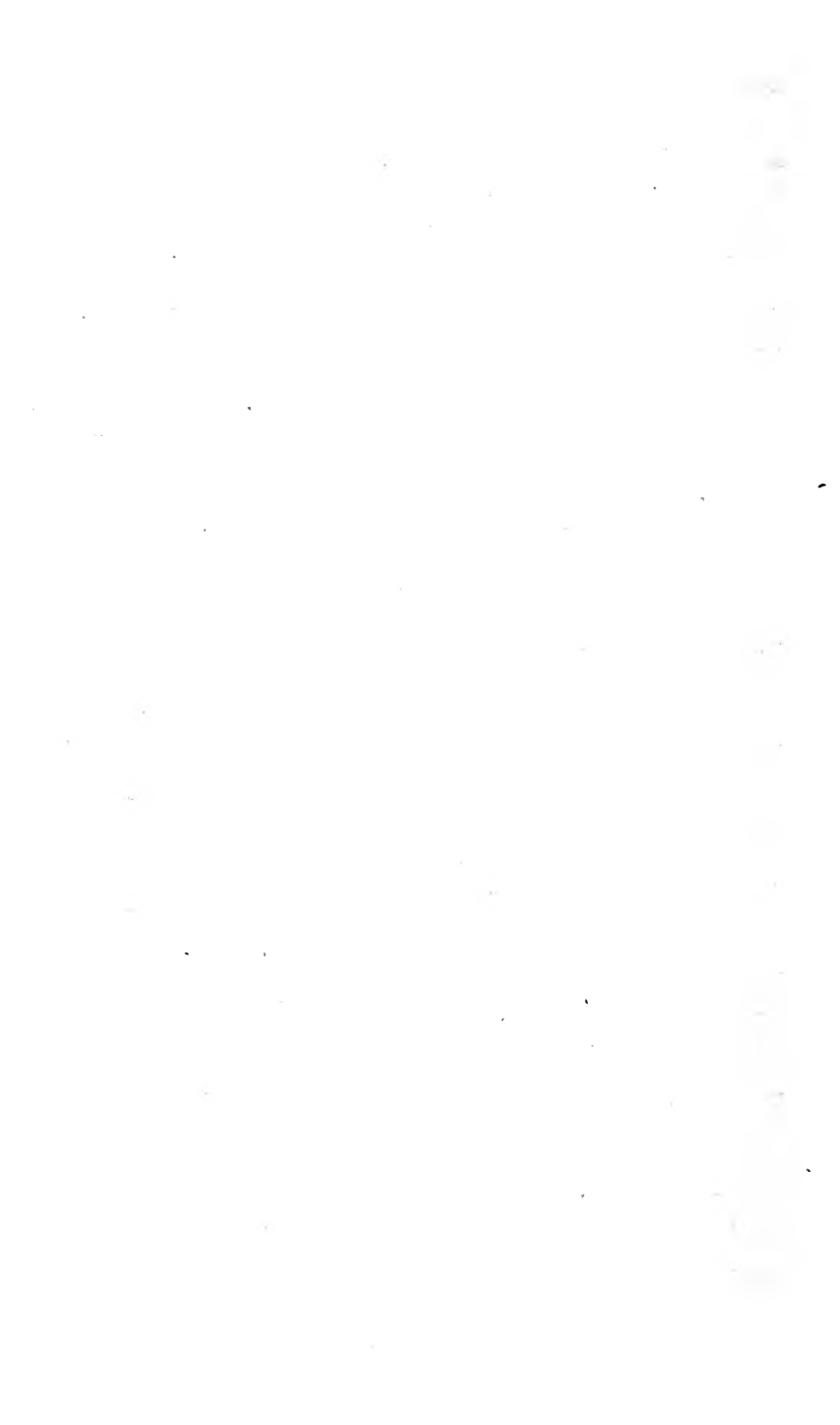
Dear Mom and Kink,

My thanks again for another letter, that of October 10, in which you tell me about Thanksgiving, Bernard's proposed visit, Marianne's piano and the gorgeous fall colours. It is good to know that you are felling fairly good, even though, as you mention, reading is tiring for your eyes. Try not to do too much of it at a time, particularly with the magnifying glass. I recall using it for a while this past summer and feeling after a few minutes as though I was rolling and heaving on the boundless main, one eye tending to scan the other.

This Friday evening past we completed the grape harvest operation which I began to describe to you in rather sketchy fashion in my last letter. The mangled grapes and stems had remained in a sort of cistern for five days. When I arrived at the vine dresser's home, he had already drawn off about 300 gallons of wine and poured it into casks in the cellar where it will continue to ferment for a few weeks yet and froth a bit through the unplugged hole in the top of the reclining barrels. The man himself was in the cistern, all I could see of him at first was his welcoming grin; he was filling buckets with the residue, the remains of the crushed grapes and stems, and handing them out to helpers, including his wife, who, brought the same over to the press in another cellar. I accompanied them to the press where I saw how the very last drop is squeezed out of those poor grapes. They certainly give their all to produce wine. The wet, dripping mangled "mess" is dumped into



a round sort of tub affair, with heavy vertical slats all around it, a huge upright threaded metal bar in the centre, a thick steel system of cranks and cogs at the top of the bar, and a kind of great saucer under the whole thing to catch the remaining wine as it is squeezed out. Once the press was full of the "grappe" as they call it, thick wooden plates are set on the surface around the threaded bar. A few spins of the crank case suffice to bring pressure to bear down on the juicy contents of the press. A rather long steel handle is fitted into the crank, and two men go to work, pushing the handle to and fro, forcing the thick wooden lid down inside the press. Meantime the residue wine comes gushing out between the press slats, streams down on to the great saucer under the press and flows from a sort of lip into a bucket not unlike the blood of a slaughtered beef, though somewhat thinner and in greater quantity. This pressed wine is put into a barrel of its own, since it is of inferior quality and inevitably shows considerable sediment in the bottom of the bottles. The two strong men crank a few minutes, catching their breath and allowing wine to seep out, then they crank it down another notch or two or three. The pressure on the press is terrific. They leave it like that for a day or two, cranking a notch or two whenever they can, until the mangled mess of grapes and stems is almost a dry pressed remains, and as though the grapes hadn't had enough already, they use that squeezed out material to make a kind of brandy (eau-de-vie) called "marc". The making of this is illegal now, except on very old properties, but I understand not much of it is thrown away or left to rot. The wine grower finds ways and



October 29, 1967

172

means of having his "marc" as well as his wine. The newly kegged wine will not be ready to taste until around Christmas time, at least after a few heavy frosts. So I really haven't completed the experience yet, but in general that is how a small farmer with a small vineyard and his own press manages to make his own wine. How fitting that the two common products, wheat and grapes, crushed and ground beyond description should have been chosen by Our Lord to constitute his own Body and Blood.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, October 29, 1967, Christ the King.

Dear Mom and Kink,

Our classrooms are strangely quiet, the long corridors abandoned, the playgrounds empty, in a word, we're on holidays, and not a student to be found anywhere on the premises. Only a few remaining resident professors manage to keep a spark of life going, and seem to enjoy the effort. Peace and repose come as welcome indeed after seven weeks of school. It's an old tradition in France that a five day holiday mark the feast of All Saints (and All Souls), an excellent idea half-way through the term. Our weather has been incredibly beautiful this October, in fact, there has been so little rain that one can scarcely put a spade into the ground. I almost needed a chisel and hammer to plant a few crocuses last week on the novitiate lawn. Tomorrow I plan to pot about 75 geranium slips; we keep them in the hothouse of a former student over the winter. Last week I spent several hours writing a letter





November 9, 1967

173

of recommendation for a student (scholastic) at St. Basil's Seminary, John Tucker, who is applying for a Rhodes Scholarship. His home is in Vancouver, but he is taking his undergraduate studies at the University of Toronto. I was in close contact with him for three years, I suppose that is why the Rhodes Commission wanted my impression of him. He is a fine young student and man. I really hope he wins it. We'll not know until sometime in March. I was very pleased to hear from Jean (Joe's) and to learn you enjoyed a pleasant thanksgiving. She is an excellent hostess. Sorry I did not get writing Bernard when he was home with you. Shall send him a line at the hospital during this holiday. Hope you are all well and keeping heated.

P.S. Offered Mass today for you and Dad. For the whole family on November 1st.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, November 9, 1967

Dear Mom and Kink,

I sincerely hope you have survived the Hallow'en ordeal and that the masked raiders will leave you in peace for another year. I have your last letter dated October 28; thanks so much for writing again and bringing me up to date on local happenings. There is not much new over here. Our weather has been exceptionally beautiful, so much so, I have been keeping my fingers crossed lest the tulips, narcisses, crocuses and daffodils which I punched into the ground at various times over the past two



November 9, 1967

174

weeks take a notion to sprout and pop out of their beds. We had two chilly rainy days after All Souls. One could see snow on the hills in the distance, but apart from that we have not shivered to speak of. This afternoon I am going to see the doctor again. His last prescription for my arthritis caused a reaction that increased the stiffness of muscles and joints rather than making them more supple. It made walking somewhat arduous, particularly in the morning, and as evening came on, but I don't believe any great harm was done, and depending on the weather, humidity, etc., I get around fairly well. It seems to indicate once again, however, as if any proof were needed, that arthritis remains as much of a mystery for the doctors as the common cold and while some relief can be provided, there is very little hope of a definitive cure. It doesn't really interfere with my teaching nor the general works of the ministry so I should not complain. It's a small thing to put up with considering the real sufferings and woes of so many people. I was glad you included some news of Michael in your last letter and that he is interested in his teacher training course. The next time he drops in please tell him I would like to hear from him personally. How is Peggy making out at Waterloo? I know Austin is a busy man, but I should like to hear from him too if he ever has a few free minutes. Please extend my best to every one. With prayers for all.

\* \* \*



November 15, 1967

175

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, le 15 novembre 1967

Dear Mom and Kink,

Your welcome letter of November 9 came this morning in weather similar to your own of late, namely a heavy rain with wind. Unlike you, however, the ground here is soaking it all up as fast as it comes down, for we have enjoyed beautiful sunshine for so long. The reservoir which supplies Annonay with all its water was, I am told, sinking down to the danger level.

You gave me lots of news in your letter. It's sad to hear so many people are seriously ill; I shall keep them all in my Mass; thank you for telling me about them.

No I haven't received any pictures of the Sunday picnic at Austin's. Would it be possible to have some more printed and send them over. I should so very much like to cherish the memories of that lovely gathering.

There have been various strikes over here: mail, railroad, etc. and it may come later on when they get around to sorting everything. I had one good delivery, however, you must tell George about this one. I mailed a letter to Vancouver one Sunday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. and received the answer the following Thursday morning at 8:30 a.m. That's pretty fair travelling.

I am on a new treatment for the arthritis now, with another doctor, and I can report some progress over the recent adverse reaction. He has me drinking Fowler's liquid (rsenic) - only a few drops of course, and for a month



December 11, 1967

176

only after which I am to continue with the Indocid which seemed to work fairly well earlier in the Fall. It's not really very bad, just pesky.

Tomorrow I am going to bring in two pots of dwarf tulips which I buried in the garden six weeks ago. I'm hoping they will be in bloom for Christmas. I have two pots of hyacinths buried too, think I'll leave them for a while yet - no great danger here of deep frost until January.

Cheerio to everyone, with love and prayers.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, December 11, 1967, 1 p.m.

Dear Mom and Kink,

I have a few moments free just now and thought I could put this sheet in the typewriter and make a start at least on an answer to your last good letter of December 1. Thanks for bringing me up to date once again on the local news.

I was sorry to hear your noble elm had crashed; it represented a good many years of weathering the gales, but once they are infected with the disease the only thing to do is to cut them down. Many of us were sad to see the enormous old elm cut down at the back of St. Michael's College. Even going back to the utmost in the memory of living St. Michael's College Alumni, it was always a big old tree, so it had surely witnessed a tussel on the playground there, and all of us were quite proud of it.

This afternoon at 4:00 p.m. we are to bury





Father Louis Mazet, a Basilian who died Saturday morning. He was 94 years, 3 months and still quite lucid the last time I visited him, which was about three weeks ago. Although a graduate student years ago in theology, he never did much teaching, except for a year or two in Blidah, Algeria, when we had a school there. He spent most of his priestly life in a parish, two parishes in fact, not far from Annonay, and has been retired for the last twenty years. He kept pretty much to his room, with a fire going in a coal stove winter and summer - it was always about 120 degrees in there, so my visits were rather brief and I had to come out to breathe. But he enjoyed anyone coming to see him, and had a remarkable memory for the names of confreres coming to see him - from the United States or Canada - while visiting in Annaonay. He was well prepared, and I'm sure is happier now. We are having a requiem Mass of concelebration for him, and after it all the concelebrants are supposed to join the cortege to the cemetery in their albs. I am to be one of the concelebrants, but since the temperature just now is well below freezing, with snow on the ground, I think I'll doff the alb and put on an overcoat or two, custom or no custom.

Just now I am giving oral examinations to my students in English. Some of them do very well, but others come out with a pretty original type of grammar and vocabulary. It takes some patience to sit it through and appear helpful and encouraging; sometimes one can hardly keep from smiling, as for example, when one of them, who was supposed to say in regard to the duties of the Prime Minister of England that each week



December 11, 1967

178

he advises the Queen on what is going on in Parliament, altered it slightly to say, "one of the duties of the Prime Minister is to entertain the Queen with what is going on in Parliament." I gave him a fair mark for his sense of British politics and good humour.

5:30 p.m. We have just come back from the cemetery with pink noses and chattering teeth. The funeral went off quite well, but we had to speed up the cortege a little because of the cold. I managed to get into my overcoat, and with your big wool scarf, the long one, do you remember it?, I didn't fare too badly at all.

I received a very fine letter from Margaret today; perhaps you can tell Anne the next time she is over. Her personality comes through her writing with remarkable fidelity.

All the best to you in these Advent days, and greet the members of the clan for me as they come in.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, December 20, 1967

Dear Mom and Kink,

It's asking quite a lot of the mail carriers to bring you this Christmas message by December 25, particularly since the 24th is a Sunday. However, if it arrives late you can consider it as having been at least composed before the great feast.

Thank you for your last letter, Mom, that of December 9. In answer to your inquiry about having the paper print the letter on the



December 20, 1967

179

European situation, I would prefer you didn't. It was really not my intention that it be made public. <sup>There</sup> here is the question of style and choice of words when it comes to publishing which is not so much of a concern in a private communication.

Fathers Wally Platt and René Robert are both well, a bit busy now at the end of the term with examinations, makrs, etc. We hold both written and orals exams over here at the end of each term.

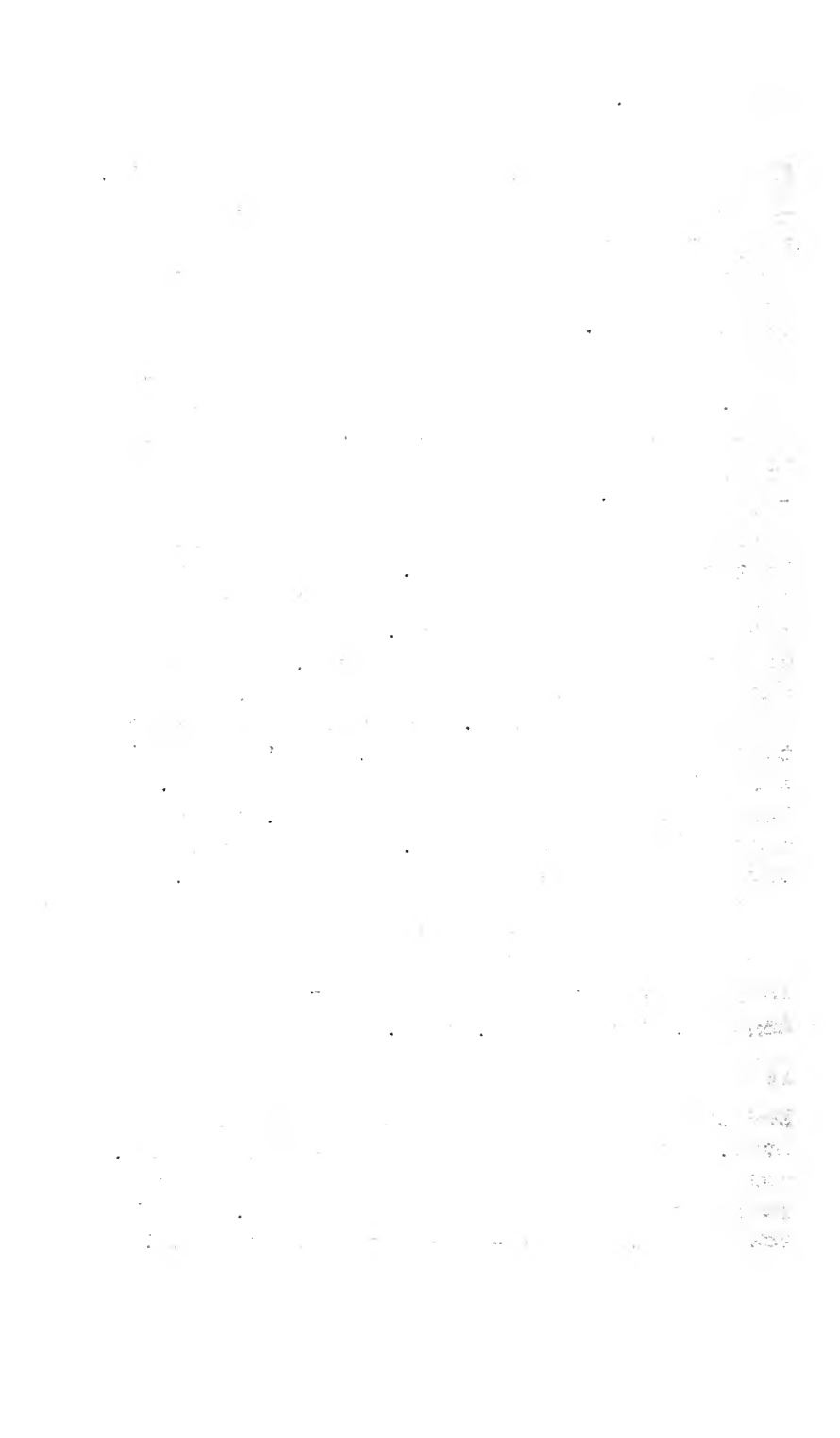
I hope the after Midnight Mass party will not be too exhausting for you. I shall be praying for you at Mass about that time since we are six hours ahead of you. There are many changes in our times, it is true, and some of the good old things are set aside for new ones of questionable value. But I think we all can take great consolation in St. Paul's words in the Epistle of the Third Sunday of Advent. Read it again if you have a moment, it seems more applicable than ever. In any case, my very best for this happy and holy season.

\* \* \*

Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur  
Annonay, December 27, 1967.

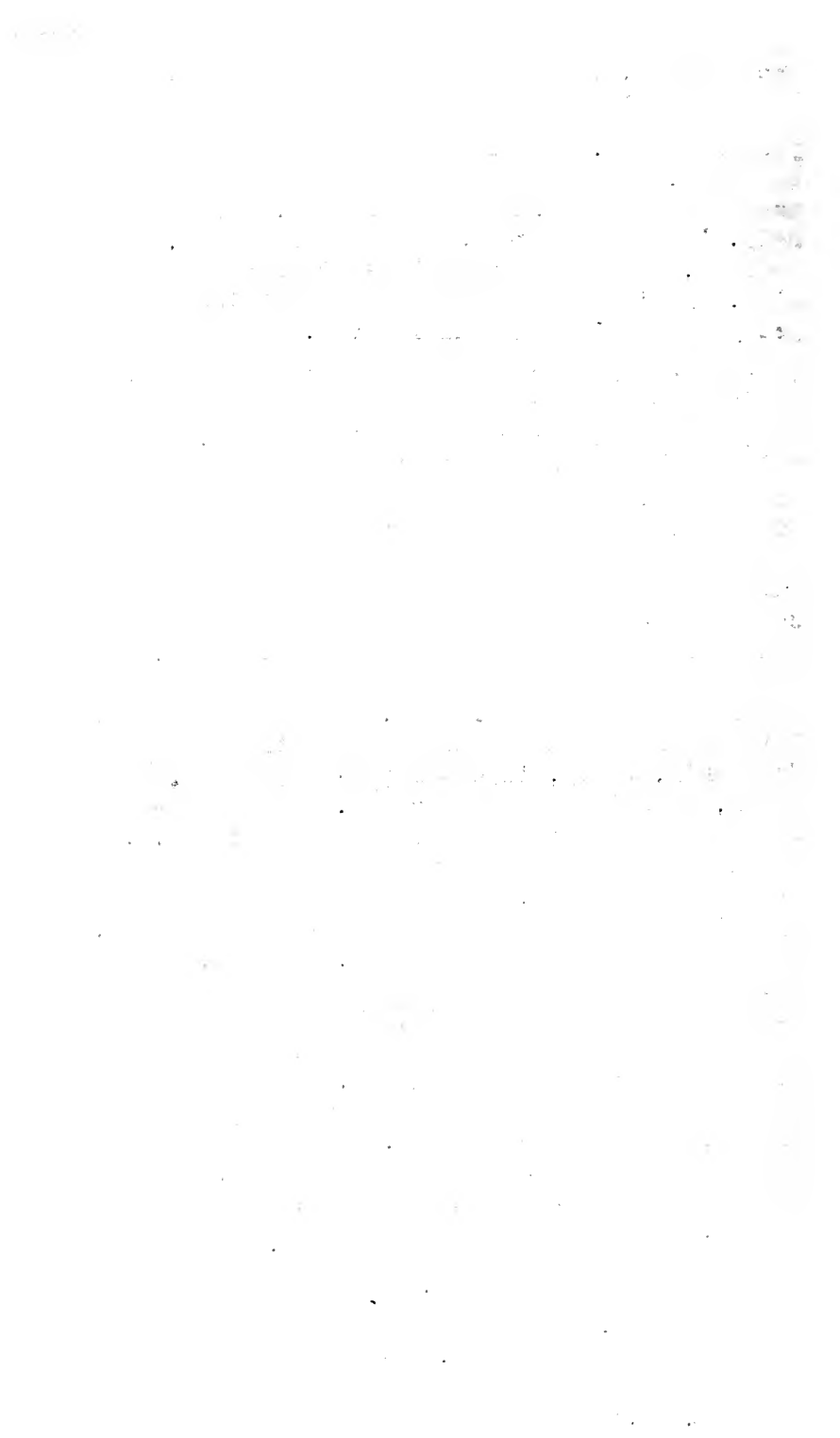
Dear Mom and Kink

Now that the press of Christmas prepatation is over, I can turn to a few unanswered letters, and in particular to your own in which you extend beautiful greetings to us all. Thank you for this Christ-like message, written in



your own hand, and also for the generous gift of money, and for enrolling me in the Christmas Novena in honour of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. You should not have sent any money, however, since your needs are greater than mine. I wish I could think of something to get you with it and send it over.

I hope you enjoyed a happy and lively Christmas with "the gang" in after Midnight Mass and that it did not leave you too exhausted. We had a very nice bible vigil and Mass at midnight here, my role being that of singing director. Afterwards the parents of our three novices with their families came into our refectory for some cakes, coffee and champagne - quite enjoyable but we didn't manage to get to bed until nearly 3:00 a.m. Such hours are getting a bit beyond me, particularly the following day, (after champagne). This morning I was to leave early from Lyons for Turin, Italy, in company with Father Edward Ronan, who is here on a visit. We had purchased tickets some days ago on the 7:00 a.m. train and even had reserved two seats in case of pressing crowds. Last night while preparing my things I discovered my passport was missing. A moment of reflexion sufficed, however, to recall that I had to hand it in at the Police Headquarters upon arrival last September in order to obtain my residence card, and that it had not been returned to me. No other identification piece can replace it at the border, so the trip was off. Our train pulled away with our two reserved seats empty. A phone call to Police Headquarters, which is in Privas, about 75 miles south of here, brought





December 27, 1967

181

me the assurance that they would put the passport in the mail today, just for the occasion, and so I should receive it tomorrow. I hope it comes through as the purpose of my jaunt to Turin is to prepare a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. John Bosco for some of our prospective future novices. I'll tell you how I made out once back.

Cheerio for now, and Happy New Year.

Fr. Kevin.

\* \* \*

(Transcribed from the originals kept by Mrs. Francis Kirley. Letters written in 1968 have not been copied)



**I N D E X**



- AGADIR, terrible tragedy, 1960, 129
- ANNONAY, France, annual outdoor bowling tournament, 1958, 61; warmest March 13 since 1880 in 1957, 9
- ARMISTICE Day, May 8, 1945, celebrated at Annonay in 1957, 17
- ASH Wednesday, one of four fast days in France, 1957, 8
- ASIATIC flu epidemic at Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, October 1957, 44
- ASSUMPTION University, Windsor, affiliation of an Anglican College, 1957, 49
- AUNT Lucy, 12
- AUNT Mary's death, 1957, 51
- AY River, France, 100
- AYME, M., teaching English at L'Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 1967-68, 161, 164
- BARRINGER, Robert Joseph (1944- ), Rhodes scholar at Oxford, 1967-68, 165
- BASILIAN Fathers, General Chapter, 1960, 130; Extraordinary General Chapter, 1961, 155; Junior Clergy Examination, 1958, 57
- BEAUNE, George Edward (1926- ), 32, 36, 57, 58, 87, 88, 108, 162; appointed to St. Joseph's High School, Ottawa, 1959, 101; raised money for a boarders' television set at L'Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 1958, 78; trip through Brittany and Normandy, summer 1957, 33; visit to Canada, summer 1959, 96, 98, 99; visit to London, September 1967, 156; visit to Rome, Easter 1957, 12, 15
- BEGLEY, Charles J., Peterborough priest, 68
- BELYEA, David Esmond (1927- ), 61; to study theology in Rome, 1957-58, 39



- BERNARD, health, 5, 12, 122
- BERT, Régis, student at L'Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, death of his father in 1960, 126
- BILLON, Jean, graduate of L'Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 104
- BISHOPS of France, meeting, May 1957, 16
- BLACK, Frederick Arthur (1924- ), 72
- BLAISE of Sebaste, St. (d.ca.316), blessing of throats on his feast not observed in Annonay, 2
- BLANCHARD, Edward, CSSR, 68
- BOURG-ARGENTAL, Loire, 99, 106
- BORWN, William James (1915- ), 21
- BURDIGNES, France, 106
- BUREAU, J. Aderville, Msgr. (d.1950), killed in an airplane crash, 118
- BURKE, John Aloysius (1921- ), 110
- BURNS, Leo, 84
- CARROLL, Cyril J., (1900- ), pastor of Our Lady of the Purification Parish, Lindsay, 23, 39, 42, 66, 69, 76, 105, 117; invited Father Kirley to attend the centennial celebrations of the Parish, 1959, 114
- CATHOLIC Action Congress, Rome, 1957, 42
- CERVANTES Saaverdra, Miguel de (1547-1616), 26
- CEVENNE Mountains, Ardèche, France, 105, 166
- CHATILLON, France, 11
- CHRIST the King College, London, Ontario, 14
- CLEMENT, Gérard, student at L'Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 1959-60, 125
- CLUAC, Ardèche, France, 75
- COFFEY, S.J. (d.1959), Peterborough priest, 119
- COLLINS, John Francis (1908- ), Mission Director of the Basilian Fathers, 123





- CONNOLLY, Mr. and Mrs. Charles, visit to Annonay, 1957, 42
- CONWAY, William Joseph (1924-1961), 21
- CORKERY, Miss (d.1958), 4, 68
- COUDERC, Alfred, Bishop of Viviers (1882-1968), 62, 98, 138; visit to L'Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, March 1957, 9
- De GAULLE, Charles André Joseph Marie (1890- ), 75; visit to Canada and the United States, 1960, 136
- DEGLENE, Michel Etienne (1936- ), 144; enjoyed his years in Canada, 67; return to France, 1958, 64
- DEGLÉSNE, Jacques Joseph (1935- ), 14; death of his father, May 1958, 63; on military service in Algeria, 1960, 144
- DIEFENBAKER, John George (1895- ), 89
- DONOVAN, Richard Bertram (1923- ), 38
- DROUILLARD, Clarence Joseph (1921- ), 83
- DUBERRY, L.M., assistant priest at Our Lady of the Purification Parish, Lindsay, 69
- ELIZABETH II, Queen of England (1926- ), state visit to France, 1957, 13
- ENGLISH class at Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, anecdote, 4, 128
- ESCORIAL, Spain, 28
- FARRELL, John, visit to Annonay, 1957, 14
- FELIPE II, King of Spain (1527-1598), 28
- FLAHIFF, George Bernard, Cardinal (1905- ), 40, 42, 66, 68, 71, 89, 90, 91, 97, 132, 133; appointed Archbishop of Winnipeg, March 1961, 152; canonical visitation at L'Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, April 1959, 92; to be consecrated Bishop on May 31, 1961, 155
- FLEURY, Robert, priest, 70



- FORESTELL, Daniel Leo (1890-1966), visit to Mr. and Mrs. F. Kirley in Lindsay, 70
- FORESTELL, James Terence (1925- ), visit to Mr. and Mrs. F. Kirley in Lindsay, 70
- FRUHBECK, Rafael, 109
- FULLERTON, Vincent Joseph (1910-1957), death in 1967, 160
- GAGARIN, Yuri A., Russian astronaut, 155
- GEMMILL, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick, Lindsay, 4
- GENESTON, Fernand Paul (1922- ), illness of his father, April 1959, 93
- GERTRUDE, anniversary, 14th on April 14, 1957, 14; anniversary in 1961, 153
- GOYA y Lucientes, Francisco José de (1746-1828), 29
- GREENAN, Peter, Lindsay, d. 1959, 93
- GRENOBLE, France, 118
- GROSPIERRES, Ardèche, France, 33
- HART, Raymond J., assistant priest, Our Lady of the Purification Parish, Lindsay, 105, 111
- HERR, Mr. and Mrs. Pat, 115
- HOLMES, Mr., death of his wife in 1961, 155
- INSTITUTION Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, Annual Old Boys dinner, 1957, 20; 1958, 62; Asiatic flu epidemic, October 1957, 44; commencement exercises, June 1957, 21; girls in classes for first time, 1967-68, 163; host in April 1961 to a meeting on the forthcoming Second Vatican Council, 154; pilgrimage of vocation group to ordinations in Cathedral at Viviers, June 1959, 102, 103, 104; pilgrimage to the shrine of the Curé d'Ars, March 1957, 11; purchase of a television set for the boarders, December 1958, 78; renovation of the Bishop's room, March 1959, 90; renovations during summer 1957, 35; resignation of lay staff during school year 1958-59, 82, 83; retreat for students, 1958, 74, 87; Solemn First Communion



**INSTITUTION Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur (cont'd).**

of students, May 1958, 65; May 1959, 98; May 1960, 139; sponsored vocation study days at Villa Saint Patrice, May 1959, 95; study day at Notre Dame d'Ay, December 3, 1959, 115; 250 is maximum enrolment, 141; vocation exhibition, March 1958, 56

**KENNEDY, John Fitzgerald (1917-1963), 145, 149**

**KENNEDY, Mary, 23, 35**

**KENNEDY, Vincent Lorne (1899- ), 123**

**KEVIN, St. (d.622), 98**

**KHRUSHCHEV, Nikita Sergeevich (1894- ), 132**

**KIRLEY, Francis, father of Father Kevin Kirley,**

birthday on January 20th, 123; Gregory,

brother of Father Kevin Kirley, 75, 150;

Kevin John (1926- ), Director of St.

Dominic Savio Club, Institution Secondaire

du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 112; elected dele-

gate to the 1960 General Chapter, 130; ob-

tained driver's licence for France, 58;

permission to attend golden wedding of his

parents in 1958, 40; permission to fly home

in case of serious illness of parents, 150;

pilgrimage to Notre Dame de La Salette,

September 1957, 37; pilgrimage to the shrine

of St. Jean Vianney, July 1959, 105; plans

for visit to Canada in summer of 1958, 71;

plans for visit to Lindsay in summer of 1958,

53; preparations for 1960 general chapter,

136; spiritual director of students con-

sidering the priesthood as their vocation,

34; summer course in Spanish at University

of Madrid, July-August, 1957, 24; at Uni-

versity of Santander, August 1959, 99, 107ff;

teaching three classes of English and one of

Spanish, 1957-58, 40; temporarily teaching

a class in mathematics, 48; travel plans to

attend 1960 general chapter, 132, 133; visit



## KIRLEY (con't)

to Lourdes, August 1957, 31, 32, 33; won copy of Moby Dick in a public speaking contest at Lindsay Collegiate Institute, 1939, 86; writing junior clergy examination, March 1958, 57, 58; Mary Agnes, Sister, sister of Father Kevin Kirley, 7, 82, 85; Mr. and Mrs. Francis, 49th wedding anniversary, September 29, 1957, 38; 13 boys and 9 girls among their grandchildren, 142; Mrs. Francis, birthday, 3; 80 on February 12, 1961, 150, 151; taught Father Simon Perdue, 39; Michael Gerard (1946- ), 91, 125, 174; Nora, nurse, 124; Paul, Niagara Falls, 136; Rosemary, sister of Father Kevin Kirley, injury to wrist, February 1957, 5; trip, 33; visit to Niagara Falls, 150

KUTZ, Stanley Eugene (1932- ), visit to Annonay, December 1959, 115

LA GRANJA, Spain, 26

LAHIFF, Kevin, Fort Lee, N.J., 79

La ROCHEPERIANDRE, Ardèche, France, 47

La SALETTE, France, 35, 37, 118

LAVERY, Chales Joseph (1915- ), visit to Annonay, July 1957, 18

LAWLOR, Thomas Anthony (1918- ), 21

LEBEL, Eugene Carlisle (1899- ), 49

Le CHEYLARD, Ardèche, France, 12, 51, 52, 59

LEXTRAIT, Marcel Pierre (1923- ), 81, 156

LONDON, England, 156

LOURDES, France, 31, 32, 33, 59, 98, 106

LYNCH, Lawrence Edward (1915- ), 62

McCARTY, Francis John (1914- ), 21

MacDONALD, John Roderick, Bp. (1891-1959), 119

McGEE, John William (1927- ), to study theology at Innsbruck, Austria, 1957-58, 39; visit to Annonay, Easter 1958, 60





- McGOLDRICK, Frank, Dundrum, Ireland, 98  
McGUIRE, James, priest, 65; First Mass, 66  
McINTYRE, Mrs. Mary E., Lindsay, 112  
McLAUGHLIN, Terence Patrick, (1903- ), 89;  
visit to Annonay, March 1957, 9  
MARCEAU, William Charles (1927- ), 129, 141,  
149; arrived at Annonay in 1959, 108; ap-  
pointed to L'Institution Secondaire du  
Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 1959, 101  
MADDEN, John Francis (1921- ), 146; Superior  
of St. Michael's College, Toronto, 138  
MADDEN, Robert Joseph (1928- ), visit to  
Annonay, Christmas 1960, 146  
MADRID, Spain, description of the city, 24-25;  
El Prado Art Museum, 29; University, 24  
MAISON Saint-Joseph, Annonay, 166  
MARCOU, Auguste (1905- ), 104  
MARGUERITE of Austria, 11  
MARIAN Year, 1958, 55  
MEAGHER, William P. (1882-1956), Peterborough  
priest, remembrance card, 5  
MAZET, Louis Marie Régis (1873-1967), funeral,  
December 11, 1967, 177, 178; sixtieth  
anniversary of ordination, 1959, 115  
MELVILLE, Herman (1819-1891), 86  
MILLEN, Mrs., Lindsay, 125  
MOBY Dick, 86  
MOLIERE, Jean Baptiste Poquelin (1622-1673),  
Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, 2  
MONT Miadon, Ardèche, France, 127  
MONT Obiou, France, crash of Canadian pil-  
grimage, 1959, 118  
MOTHERS DAY in France, May 26, 1957, 17, 18;  
May 29, 1960, 137  
MURILLO, Bartolomé Esteban (1617-1682), 29  
MURPHY, Bill and Kay, visit to Europe, 1957,  
42, 43, 44, 45



- MUSHROOM Exhibition at the Lycée Ampère, Lyon,  
October 1960, 142
- MY Fair Lady, 45
- NATIONAL Art Gallery, London, 156
- NATIONAL Eucharistic Congress, Lyon, July  
1959, 104
- NEW YORK State, cold spell, 1957, 1
- NOTRE Dame d'Ay, Ardèche, France, 36, 94
- O'BRIEN, William Hilary (1922- ), 21
- ORLY Airport, Paris, France, 72
- OUR Lady of the Purification Parish, Lindsay,  
centennial volume, 1959, 126; church re-  
decorated, 1958, 76
- PAQUETTE, Olive, 18
- PENAFIAL, Spain, 26
- PERDUE, Simon Andrew (1893-1966), 68; pilgrim-  
age to European Marian Shrines, 1957, 39
- PHILIBERT, Duke of Burgundy, 11
- PIUS XII, Pope, (1876-1958), death of, 75
- PLATT, Edwin, pastor of St. Thomas More  
Parish, Toronto, 160
- PLATT, Philip Wallace (1925- ), 13, 30, 45,  
58, 64, 82, 83, 97, 116, 127, 131, 137,  
155, 160, 162, 179; Director of the St.  
John Bosco Club, L'Institution Secondaire  
du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 113; elected  
Procurator General by the 1960 General  
Chapter, 141; local councillor at L'Insti-  
tution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay,  
41; obtained Licence ès Lettres, June 1957,  
20; returned to Annonay, September 28, 1957;  
sails for Canada, July 4, 1957, 23; visit  
to Canada in summer of 1957, 18; visit to  
Mr. and Mrs. Francis Kirley, Lindsay,  
August, 1957, 32
- POLITO Family, Lindsay, 3



- POPCORN, fascinated boys at festivities on the feast of the Sacred Heart, Annonay, June 1959, 100
- POUPORE, James Gareth (1922- ), 92; visit with Mr. and Mrs. Francis Kirley, Lindsay, 1960, 129
- POUZOL, Félix Jules (1911- ), 104
- PRINCIPE, Chalres John (1929- ), 57, 141, 149; appointed to Aquinas Institute, Rochester, 1959, 101; passed exams towards L ès L degree, June 1957, 20; to do parish work in London, England, summer 1957, 23; visit to Rome, Easter 1957, 12, 15
- PRIVAS, Ardèche, France, 180
- READMAN, Marcia, 111, 113, 114
- READMAN, Mrs. M., Peterborough, 111
- REGAN, Herbert Basil (1912-1958), 78
- REGIS, farmer at L'Institution Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 121
- REYNOUARD, Georges Louis (1921- ), 96, 102; visit to his home, 1967, 160
- RIVADELAGO, Spain, disastrous flood, January 1959, 83
- ROBERT, René Adrien (1925- ), 65, 68, 92, 93, 119, 132, 133, 136, 138, 179; difficulties arising from resignation of lay teachers, 1958-59, 83; ex-officio member of the 1960 gneral chapter, 131; sill, September 1958, 73; visit to Canada in summer of 1958, 54, 67, 69, 70, 71, 96
- ROCHINGNEUX, Canon, preached retreat for Basilian Fathers at Annonay, 1960, 141
- RODGER, Leo (d.1959), 93
- RONAN, Edward Xavier (1924- ), visit to Annonay, Christmas 1967, 180
- ROUME, Charles Léon Luc (1901-1965), 22, 37, 40, 96, 138, 157; ex-officio member of the



ROUME, Charles Léon Luc (cont'd).

1960 general chapter, 131; represented  
Basilian Fathers at the Council of Viviers,  
May 1957, 16; travel plans to Toronto for  
1960 general chapter, 134

ROURE, Jean Félix (1925- ), 96, 129; Superior  
of the Basilian Fathers at L'Institution  
Secondaire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 1967,  
157

SAINT Basil's Novitiate, Annonay, 159

SAINT Basile, Ardèche, France, 75

SAINT Dominic Savio Club, L'Institution Secon-  
daire du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 112

SAINT Francis, Mother, 82

Saint François d'Assise Paroisse, Annonay, 62,  
102

SAINT John Bosco Club, L'Institution Secondaire  
du Sacré-Coeur, Annonay, 113

SAINT Joseph de Cance Church, Annonay, 63

SAINT Joseph's High School, Ottawa, 46, 48, 78

SAINT Julien-Molin-Molette, Ardèche, France,  
80, 119, 143, 147

SAINT Marcel, Ardèche, France, 44

SAINT Michael's College, Toronto, big elm tree  
cut down, 176

SAINT MICHAEL'S College School, Toronto, 78

SAINT Romain d'Ay, Ardèche, France, 59, 60, 64

SAINT Rombert d'Alben, France, 156

SAINT Sauveur en rue, Ardèche, France, 99

SALAMANCA, Spain, 26

SAN Sebastian, Spain, 107

SANTANDER, Spain, ~~description~~ of city, 108;  
University, 19, 99

SATELLITE, Russian, 50

SCOLLARD, Robert Joseph (1908- ), 39, 117,  
123

SEGOVIA, Spain, 26





- SHINE, Mr. and Mrs., 43  
SLACK, Mrs. (d.1959), 116  
THORRENCE, Ardèche, France, 44  
TOLEDO, Spain, 29  
TUCKER, John Joseph (1944- ), applying for  
a Rhodes scholarship, 1967, 165, 173  
UNCLE Joe, sickness, 5  
UNITED States of America, Presidential cam-  
paign, 1960, 144  
VALENCE, France, 94, 106  
VALLADOLID, Spain, 26, 84  
VAUDEVANT, Ardèche, France, 135  
VELAZQUEZ, Diego Rodriguez de Silva (1599-1660),  
29  
VIANNEY, Jean Baptiste Marie, Saint, (1786-1859),  
93  
VIENNE, Ardèche, France, 68  
VILLA Saint Patrice, 31, 33  
VIVIERS, Council of, May 1957, 16; ordinations  
in cathedral, June 1959, 102  
VOCANCE, Ardèche, France, 91  
WALIGORE, Arthur Francis (1924- ), 140  
WALSH, Mrs., 82  
WARREN, John Arthur (1909- ), 124; Chaplain  
with the Royal Canadian Air Force at Metz,  
France, 1959, 91  
WEBSTER, Benjamin Ibberson (1898- ), 66  
WINEmaking, 167ff  
ZAMORA, Spain, 83, 84



































